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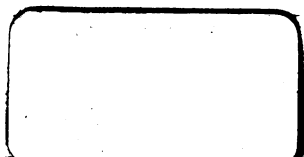


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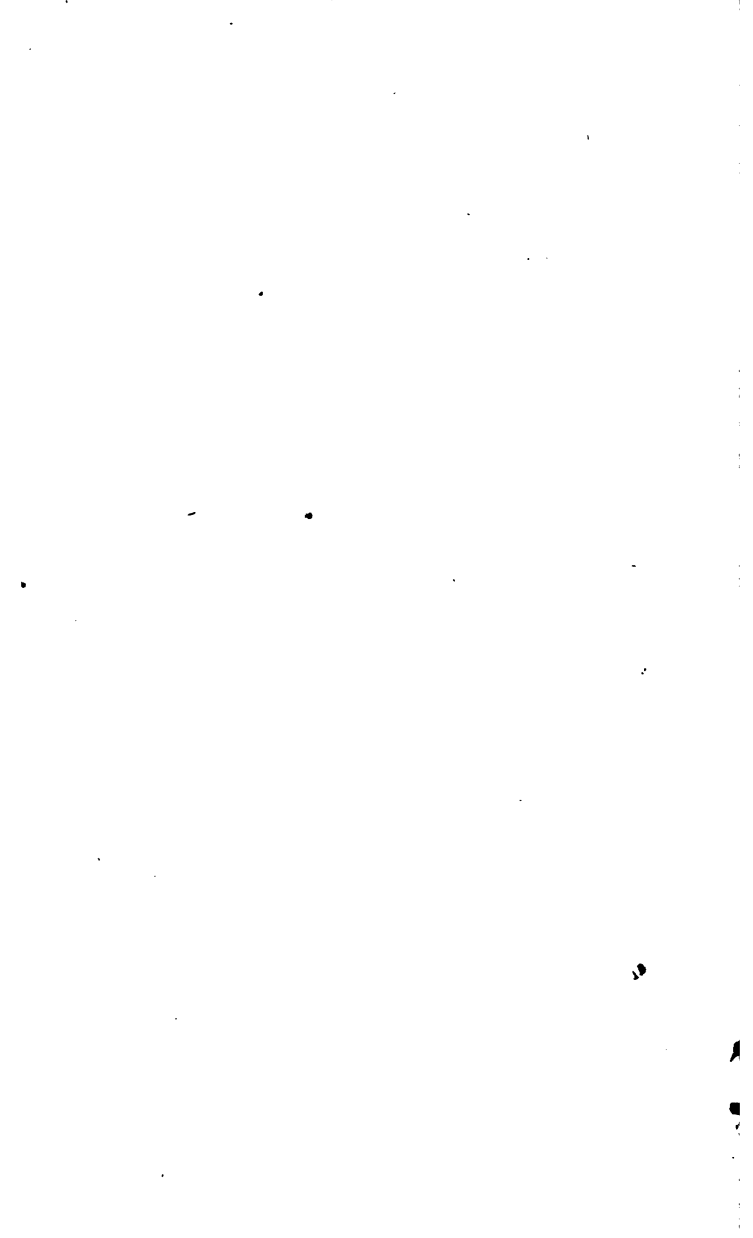
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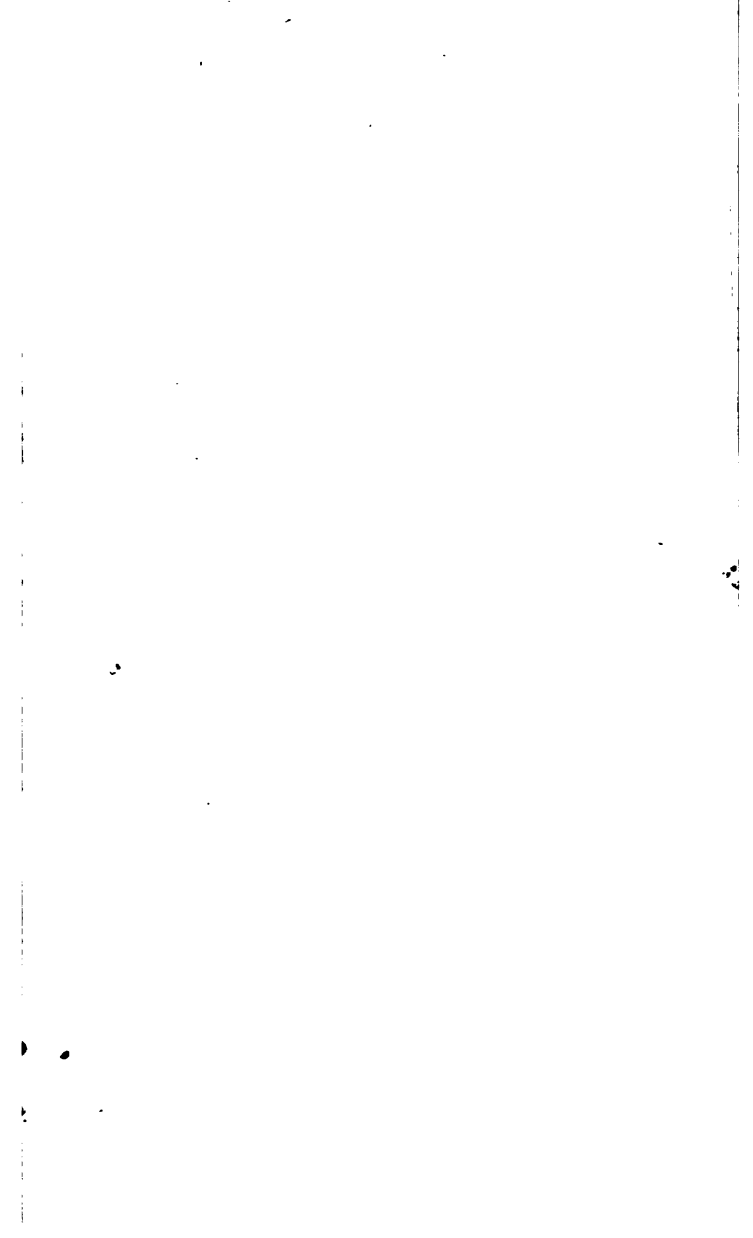
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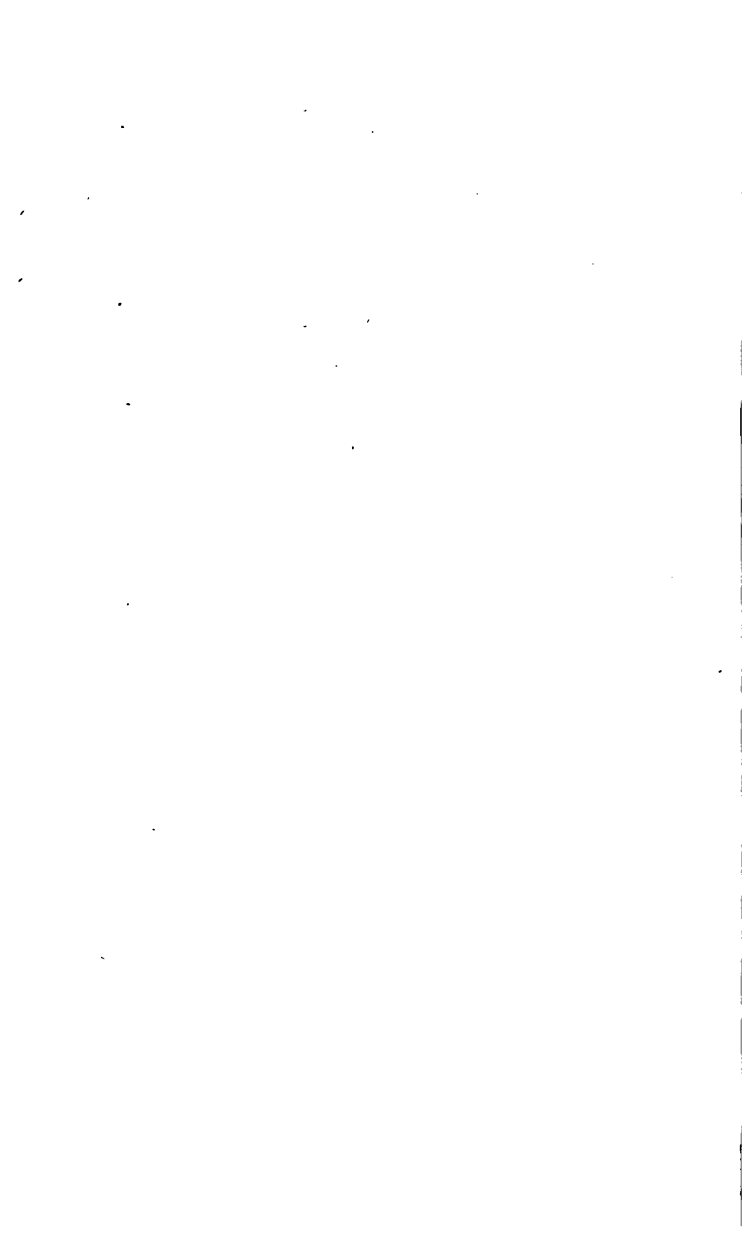
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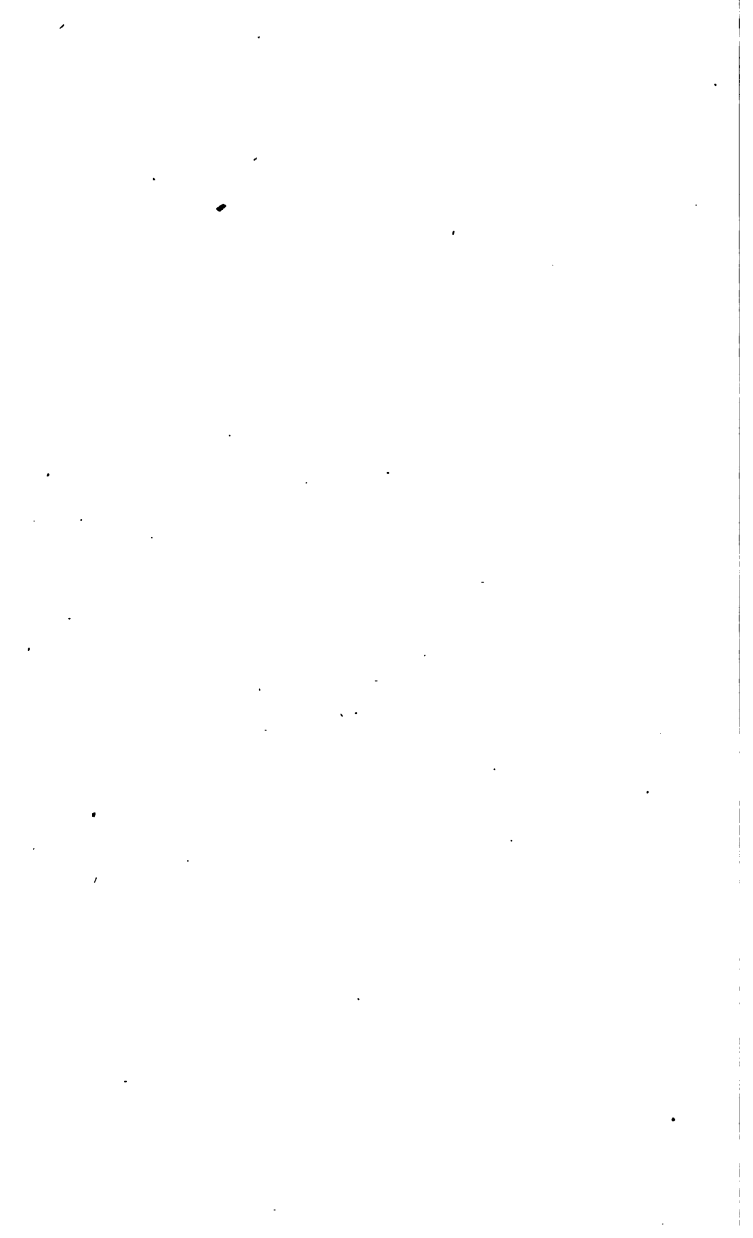
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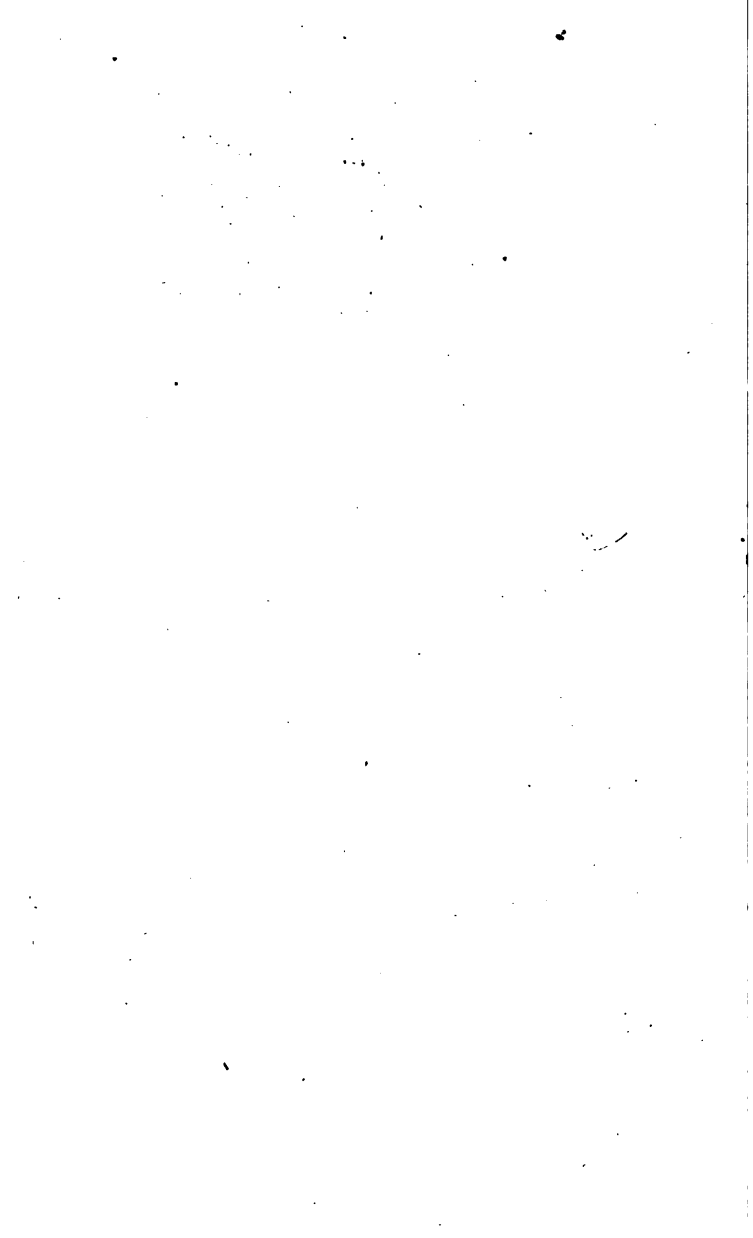
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LIVES
OF
EMINENT FOREIGN STATESMEN.

DON LOUIS DE HARO.

BORN 1598, DIED 1661.

DON LOUIS DE HARO, one of the most amiable, if not the most talented, of statesmen, and certainly one of the most beloved and esteemed of ministers, was born at Valladolid in the month of February, 1598 ; the eldest son of the marquis de Carpio, and of Francesca de Gusman, sister of the famous count duke Olivarez.

Allied to all the noblest families of Spain, descended from a race famous in the history of the monarchy, endowed with considerable talents and various accomplishments, don Louis de Haro was well entitled to look up to the highest employments in the state. On those high employments he undoubtedly fixed his eyes from a very early period of life ; but we cannot discover that in so doing he made use of any petty intrigue, or had recourse to one low or mean-spirited action. He was early introduced to the notice of Philip IV., king of Spain, and was, we are told on good authority, educated with that monarch while yet merely prince of Asturias.

Upon the disgrace of the duke of Lerma, and when

most of the branches of the family of Gusman united to raise Olivarez to the post of prime minister, the interest of don Louis de Haro was strongly exerted in favour of his uncle, and proved very effectual in promoting his interest with the young king. During the administration of Olivarez he enjoyed several considerable posts at court; was always regarded by Philip with esteem and affection; and early obtained a place in the councils of the monarch. The count duke, however, soon became jealous of the influence of his nephew; nor was the conduct of don Louis de Haro calculated to conciliate the imperious minister. With frank and generous straightforwardness of conduct, he never in any degree disguised the opinions he entertained, and on various occasions opposed the designs of his uncle; endeavouring to promote a peace between France and Spain, and predicting the revolt of Portugal, some time before that event took place. Some authors* have asserted that Olivarez bore these contradictions with exemplary patience; and though he followed no guidance but his own will, loved and esteemed don Louis for his frankness and sincerity. The general opinion, however, is that Olivarez was both jealous and angry; and that opinion is certainly more consistent with human nature in general, and with the individual character of the man.

Before any cause for such feelings became apparent, however, a proposal was made for uniting the house of Carpio and Olivarez by the ties of marriage. The only daughter of the count duke, donna Maria de Gusman, beautiful, accomplished, and amiable, was marriageable at the time when her father, on the death of don Balthasar de Zuniga, formally took upon himself the office of prime minister; and it would appear that her beauty and accomplishments drew the attention and won the affection of her noble cousin. No alliance could be more suitable in every respect to the daughter of the minister. At that period (1623) don Louis de Haro was in his twenty-fifth year, and donna Maria a few years younger.

* Biographie Universelle.

He was loved and respected by his sovereign and the court; the heir to the marquisate of Carpio; his family was one of the oldest in Spain, and was distinguished from the crowd of noble houses whose pedigree loses itself in the dark ages of Gothic rule, by many great and important services against the Moors, and by its long feuds with the powerful race of Lara. His hereditary property was extensive: in default of direct issue he was heir to Olivarez himself; and his talents and station gave him the power of supporting his uncle's administration during the life of the count duke, and the probability of succeeding to his office at his death. Nevertheless, notwithstanding all these advantages, Olivarez refused his consent to the union of his daughter with his nephew; and Louis de Haro, mortified and disappointed, retired from the list of competitors for her hand. She was, as we have said elsewhere, married shortly afterwards to Ramiro Marquis Toral; but the resentment of don Louis, if he felt any, was extinguished by her unfortunate death, which took place little more than a year after her marriage. He himself before long married Catharine of Cordova, daughter of the duke of Cardona, by whom he had several children.

During the rest of what may be considered as the reign of Olivarez, there is every reason to believe that the minister made various efforts to drive don Louis from the court and councils of Philip, but that his attempts were rendered unsuccessful by the constant affection and esteem which the monarch entertained towards the companion of his youth.* To the same jealous spirit of enmity, also, some persons have attributed the wild and extraordinary act committed by the count duke in legitimising the bastard, Henry de Gusman, whose affinity to himself was somewhat more than doubtful. It is probable, however, that Olivarez was actuated merely by the same whimsical and capri-

* Various letters written by Italians at the court of Madrid about the time of the fall of Olivarez represent him as most bitterly exasperated against his nephew.

cious spirit, in this instance, which he showed in many others. That step, however, alienated from his interests for ever the powerful race of Carpio ; and although don Louis himself does not appear to me to have taken any share in working his uncle's fall, yet it would seem that his father was not withheld by the connection between them from hurrying the descent of his brother-in-law as far as it was in his power.

When that event was consummated, and the reins of government snatched from the hands of Olivarez, the young monarch, conscious of the evil which the rule of favourites, under the title of prime ministers, had brought upon the state, determined to govern for himself, and announced that he would, in person, transact the business of the country with the various members of the administration. It required, however, a prince of more comprehensive mind, and habits less indolent, than Philip IV., to execute such a purpose. The administration of Olivarez, also, had left a legacy of misfortunes to the government, in which Philip soon found it unpleasant to share. The revolt of Catalonia was in no degree appeased by the dismissal of the minister ; Portugal was not regained ; and whatever expectations had been entertained that relaxed exertions would take place on the part of France, in consequence of the death of Richelieu, were put an end to by the fatal battle of Rocroy, in which the famous Spanish infantry were almost annihilated.

Under these circumstances, the king soon resigned a task which was both painful and burdensome to a prince of an idle disposition, and don Louis de Haro appeared with the title of prime minister. Not a more unfortunate moment could have been chosen for a statesman to appear upon the political stage. Don Louis found a country dismembered and in revolt, a foreign army in one of its finest provinces, its troops defeated and discouraged, its treasury exhausted, and its resources in the most lamentable state of mismanagement and decay. His own powers of mind

were not of a character calculated to remedy the existing evils by any wide-reaching and brilliant schemes, or any sudden and energetic measures ; but patience, fortitude, calmness, steady determination, and unwearied activity were means within his power, and these he proceeded to employ.

He was met, however, at the outset by a cabal formed to overthrow his government, and remove him from political power ; and their efforts were sufficiently open and active to give him some cause, of uneasiness. The principal personages thus opposed to him were the count Oñate, a nobleman of considerable talent, and of more specious and brilliant qualities than don Louis himself ; the duke of Medina de las Torres, less distinguished for his abilities than for his wealth and influence, and the duke of Alva, who brought little to the cabal but a gallant and generous heart, a large fortune, and the mighty name bequeathed him by his remote ancestor. This confederation might have proved formidable to the minister in the outset of a difficult and dangerous career, or, at all events, might have embarrassed his measures, and created that sort of inert opposition which is the most difficult to combat. Scarcely was the cabal formed, however, before it was again dissolved by the death of the count Oñate, who left none behind him capable of filling his place, or of aspiring to the office held by don Louis.

When Olivarez had entered upon power, he had marked the difference of his views from those of the duke of Lerma, and his personal hatred of that minister, by a total change of measures, and by the persecution of all the friends and favourites of the cardinal duke. Not so, however, don Louis de Haro. The disgrace of the minister himself had already taken place before the royal authority was intrusted to him ; and no very severe measures even were pursued towards don Henry de Guzman, who had been raised from the dregs of the people, and from the lowest point of moral degradation, to deprive him of that succession to which his right of birth entitled him.

The plans which had been pursued by Olivarez, as far as opposition to France went, were continued by don Louis de Haro, although he had always advocated the necessity of concluding a peace with that power, as soon as it could be accomplished, without direct injury to Spain. The proceedings against the revolted province of Catalonia, also, went on as before, and the war was still continued with Portugal; but in all these transactions a slight modification took place in the execution, which was strongly characteristic of the calm sagacity and moderation of the Spanish statesman. Instead of endeavouring to prevent Philip from seeing with his own eyes the condition of his people, or from witnessing the efforts — perhaps the reverses — of his arms, don Louis gave his sovereign every encouragement to go from place to place throughout his dominions, to show himself to his subjects, and to put himself at the head of his forces. He accompanied and counselled him, it is true; but he did not attempt to restrain him; and, most wisely, he attributed every great act to the monarch rather than to himself. By making the king a party to every thing that was done, he gained Philip's gratitude and affection for every honourable and successful event which attended his rule, while he engaged the monarch's own vanity in his defence and justification on all those points where reverse and disappointment followed any of his measures.

In regard to Catalonia, though using every exertion to obtain a preponderance for the Castillian arms, he counselled the king to hold out milder terms to his revolted subjects; and although little immediate effect was produced by this measure, yet there can be no doubt that it ultimately tended to the pacification of the province.

In the mean time, by the advice of don Louis, Philip quitted Madrid in July, 1643, and proceeding to Saragossa, put himself at the head of his army, although at that time he could only bring into the field a body of 12,000 men, in opposition to the French

forces, and to the revolted people of Catalonia. The capture of the small town of Monçon was the first success which rewarded the exertions of Philip ; and after a campaign not very glorious to either party, the monarch returned to Madrid, where he passed the winter. Early in the spring, however, he once more set out for the army, encouraging the troops by his presence, though but little interfering with the command. The real direction of the army was intrusted to don Philip de Sylva, who had served in the Low Countries with distinction under the lamented cardinal infant ; and anxious to distinguish a campaign in which the king was present by some decisive event, the general advanced to the siege of Lerida ; while don Louis, in the king's name, issued a proclamation to the Catalonians, promising a general pardon to all who would return to their duty, with the exception of those concerned in the murder of the viceroy.

No sooner did the French commander, the marshal de la Mothe Houdancourt, hear of the movements of the Spanish force, than, despising his enemy, he marched with little precaution to the relief of Lerida. A battle immediately took place, in which the French were totally defeated, with a loss of 3000 men, all their baggage, and twelve pieces of artillery. A large body of the fugitives, however, threw themselves into Lerida, thus greatly increasing the strength of the garrison : and De Sylva seems to have hesitated to attack the place till he received the distinct orders of the king to that effect. The siege was undertaken under the eye of the king himself ; who, in spite of many remonstrances, remained in the camp, although an epidemic sickness was thinning rapidly the ranks of the Spanish army. The city was soon forced to surrender ; but such favourable terms were given to the garrison by don Philip de Sylva, that the king expressed considerable dissatisfaction. That officer immediately resigned his command, and his place was supplied by Andrea Cantelmo, another general brought up in the same school.

While these proceedings had been taking place in the neighbourhood of Lerida, La Mothe Houdancourt had laid siege to Tarragona ; and the Spanish army had by this time been so thinned by war and disease, that it was not found competent to march to the relief of that port. Philip, however, returned to Saragossa ; and there, by his own personal exertions, but more especially by the efforts of don Louis de Haro, he obtained such supplies and reinforcements as enabled Cantelmo to relieve Tarragona, and to capture the important town of Balaguer. After various other events, the monarch was recalled to Madrid by the illness of the queen, who terminated a life most valuable to Spain on the 6th of October, 1645.

Although so successful in Catalonia, the war with France and Holland presented in other parts of the world an aspect most disastrous towards Spain. The prince of Condé trod as a victor the whole banks of the Rhine ; and in Flanders, the arms of the French and Dutch were equally successful. On the frontiers of Portugal took place several events, in which, though the military advantage was claimed by both sides, the arms of Spain, at all events, did not advance ; and don Louis de Haro, seeing nothing but evil likely to accrue from the continuation of the war, endeavoured to negotiate a peace by making overtures to the king's sister, Anne of Austria, then invested with the regency of France. In these efforts, however, he was disappointed ; and in the following year he once more led Philip to Saragossa, accompanied by the young prince Balthazar, then in his seventeenth year. Here the states of the kingdom of Arragon were assembled, and Philip proposed to the assembly, formally to acknowledge his son as heir to the kingdom of Arragon ; but, to the surprise of the monarch and his minister, the deputies of Arragon, which in the last campaign had shown the utmost zeal and activity in favour of his king, now refused to take the oath of fidelity to the young prince, except under conditions of their own dictating. The anger and mortification of Philip was such, that a violent fit of illness was the

consequence, and it was a considerable time before he was sufficiently recovered to quit the disaffected capital of Arragon.

During the continuance of his illness, don Louis de Haro took means to ascertain what province was most likely to counteract by its loyalty the effect produced by the resistance of the Arragonese ; and as soon as the king was able to travel he led him to Valencia, where the Cortes of that kingdom were assembled, and immediate assistance was cheerfully granted to the monarch, who speedily recovered his health and spirits, and returning to the scene of war, once more put himself at the head of the army.

In the mean while, the prince Balthazar remained at Saragossa under the direction of a governor the least suited that it is possible to conceive, for the important task of rearing a future sovereign to the duties of a throne. He had been encouraged by this person in various excesses the most detrimental to his health, and had taken, we are told, various empirical drugs in order to restore the vigour he had lost. These drugs produced so violent an effect upon his constitution, that don Louis de Haro was sent for, and a regular physician was immediately called in. From the minister, and from the physician, however, were concealed the real causes of his malady ; and the state of feverish excitement into which he had fallen was attributed to his having overheated himself at tennis. The same was reported to the king, who had arrived some little time before at Saragossa ; and the physician immediately ordered large depletion, which it was supposed would speedily restore the prince to health. The effect, however, was quite contrary to that which had been expected : the exhausted constitution of the prince was unable to bear the severe treatment to which it was subjected, and instantly beginning to sink under the bleeding, he died in the presence of don Louis de Haro, before the king could be made aware of his danger.

Horror-struck at what he beheld, and foreseeing a

train of the most terrible consequences to Spain from the death of the only male heir of the monarchy, the minister proceeded to break the tidings to Philip. The grief and agitation painted on his countenance immediately communicated to the monarch the fatal intelligence. As soon as his fears were confirmed, he retired into his cabinet in silence; and, after waiting some time, don Louis, fearful of the effect which grief might have upon his mind, ventured to follow him. To his surprise, however, he found Philip writing letters to the commanders of his various armies, calmly announcing the event which had occurred, and declaring that having now no son, he should only the more entirely regard his people as his children.

Although the causes of don Balthazar's death had been carefully concealed by his licentious governor, the irregularities of his life, and the debaucheries into which he had suffered him to plunge, could not be so completely veiled, as to escape the inquiries which don Louis de Haro immediately instituted. The facts of don Balthazar's illness were eventually discovered, and communicated to Philip, who at once punished the faithless governor, to whom he had intrusted his son, with banishment, from which he was not suffered to return till after the monarch's death.

The health of the young prince of the Asturias had long been sufficiently delicate to give alarm to the Spanish court, in regard to a failure of the succession to the crown; and don Louis de Haro had eagerly pressed the king to marry again, after the death of his first wife. The monarch, however, had constantly refused to do so, giving himself up to various amours which very much injured and degraded him in the eyes of his people. During the life of Balthazar, the hand of the infanta, Maria Theresa, had been from time to time held out to the court of France, as an inducement to enter into reasonable terms of pacification with Spain; and the probability of her succeeding to her father's dominions rendered the offer tempting to the ministers of Anne of Austria.

As soon, however, as she became the heir-apparent to the throne, the customs of Castille were opposed to her union with a foreign monarch, and, therefore, though France would have been all the more eager from this change of circumstances to conclude a marriage between her and Louis XIV., the ministers of Philip were prevented from proceeding with any negotiations on the subject.

Under these circumstances, the king was again pressed to select another sharer of his throne, and various princesses were proposed; amongst whom were Leonora Gonzaga, daughter of the duke of Mantua, and Henrietta, daughter of the weak and treacherous Gaston duke of Orleans. A princess of the house of Austria, however, was preferred; and although there can be no doubt that the ministers of Philip determined still to hold out to Louis XIV. the prospect of an union with the infanta, yet it would appear that in the negotiations which took place between the courts of Madrid and Vienna the emperor was allowed to entertain expectations of obtaining the hand of Maria Theresa for his son, the king of Hungary.

In the mean while various disasters had befallen Spain, which appeared to render peace more necessary than ever. The celebrated count of Harcourt had been placed at the head of the French troops in Catalonia; and, with the good fortune which usually attended him, had taken Rosas, forced the position of Cantelmo on the Segrá, and compelled Balaguer to surrender. Here, however, stopped short the French achievements in that quarter. Cantelmo died of grief at the reproaches cast upon him. Philip de Sylva, the former commandant, was restored to the post he had previously occupied; but after a short period of authority, in which he effected little against the French, he also died. Legañez, so often unsuccessful in Italy, was then recalled to the command, and opposed to the very general who had so frequently defeated him.

At this time the count de Harcourt, after having been

called suddenly to Barcelona by the famous conspiracy of the baroness de Albi, had returned and laid siege to Lerida; and so completely were the Spanish arms depressed at that period, so little hope was entertained of Legañez effecting any thing against the French commander, that don Louis de Haro proposed to grant the Catalonians a truce of thirty years, which, in all probability, would have been acceded to by the revolted province, had not the French, though ashamed to oppose so advantageous an offer, embarrassed the negotiations with stipulations in their own favour, which they well knew must put an end to the whole transaction. In the mean time, however, Harcourt pressed the siege of Lerida closely, and utterly despising the talents of his adversary, took few precautions against any sudden attack. Legañez, anxious to repair by some action of vigour the defeats he had formerly suffered, approached the French army by rapid marches; and dividing his forces into two bodies, one of which was ordered to direct its whole efforts to throw supplies and reinforcements into Lerida, while the other engaged the besieging army, he attacked the camp of the French marshal at midnight, and not only relieved Lerida, but entirely defeated the enemy, taking all his baggage and artillery, and dispersing the French in every direction.

According to the Spanish accounts of these events, the French army, which when it sat down before Lerida consisted of 18,000 infantry, and 4000 cavalry, lost 10,000 infantry and 2000 cavalry in the siege and the battle. As may be well supposed, this event gave the greatest satisfaction to the Spanish people; and some minor successes, which were gained in Italy, contributed to raise the spirits of the nation.

Although don Louis de Haro shared strongly in the satisfaction which these events spread throughout Spain, he, in no degree, suffered a momentary triumph to blind his eyes to the real situation of the country, nor to turn him from that line of policy which he had all along advocated. While he was relaxing no exertion to main-

tain in the field as firm a position as circumstances permitted, and to recover, as far as possible, that position from which Spain had gradually been sinking ever since the tyrannical oppression of a bigotted king, and the barbarous cruelty of a great but ferocious minister, had driven the people of Holland into revolt, and confirmed them therein for ever, he, nevertheless, pursued with clear and steady perseverance his design of terminating as speedily as possible the long and sanguinary contest which had proved so disastrous to his native land. For this purpose, he kept up constant negotiations with the people of Holland, veiling them, indeed, as much as possible, from the eyes of surrounding nations, in order that those whose interest it was to keep the two countries at enmity might have no opportunity of impeding his efforts for a restoration of peace. Though attained by slow degrees, still success attended his endeavours; and although he could not absolutely hide from the court of France that he was attempting to negotiate a separate peace with the United Provinces, while the general plenipotentiaries held the long and tedious conferences of Munster, yet he gained, one after another, a number of the deputies to the states general. Thus in the year 1646 we find, by a letter from the prince of Orange, that Pauw, deputy for the province of Holland, "had already taken measures to conclude a separate peace."

It need scarcely be pointed out, that the advantage to be obtained by Spain was immense, in separating the United Provinces from France. So long as the tedious negotiations of Munster proceeded, every remonstrance of Spain and the empire against the excessive demands of the French was met by some new victory or advantage; while the troops of Spain, occupied by enemies at a thousand different points, could not be concentrated for any great and general effort. The moment that a separate peace was concluded with Holland, immense resources would instantly be placed at the command of the Spanish minister. Secure in the Indies, secure on the northern frontier of Flanders, all the men, money,

and ships, so long employed in those quarters, might be brought at once to the defence of Spain, against the single but powerful adversary whom she had most to fear.

Well knowing that the commercial habits and interests of the Dutch people rendered peace as dear to them as war was to the military and unquiet people of France, the Spanish minister was certain of obtaining better terms in a negotiation with the Dutch alone, than if he treated with them in conjunction with the French. Thus while the long negotiations of Munster proceeded, and while the prince de Condé, supplying the place of count Harcourt, attempted in vain to make himself master of Lerida, don Louis eagerly pushed forward his intrigues with the Dutch deputies, and by the means of the count of Peñaranda and Anthony Brun, a native of Franche Comté, concluded, in the beginning of 1647, a suspension of arms between Spain and Holland, which was followed, at the interval of a year, by a treaty of peace between those two countries.

The conditions were, that the king of Spain should renounce all his claims of sovereignty upon the United Provinces, which he recognised thenceforth as an independent state ; that each country should retain whatever it possessed at the signature of the treaty ; that the navigation to the East and West Indies should be open to both nations, and that there, also, Spain and Holland should remain possessed of whatever settlements were actually in their respective hands. Spain, in fact, yielded nothing but that which she could not retain, and Holland obtained the inestimable blessing of peace, and the glory of having established her rights and liberties, after one of the most sanguinary and desperate struggles upon record. The diplomatic skill displayed in carrying through this arrangement was very great, and a considerable share thereof naturally rests with don Louis de Haro, who conducted the negotiations from the commencement ; though the inferior agents, especially Brun, showed infinite talent in concealing their proceedings from such

skilful diplomatists as Servien and others, and in effecting their purpose with the states, notwithstanding the strong opposition of the prince of Orange.

Freed from the contest with Holland, the Spanish monarchy assumed a much more formidable aspect towards France than before. The Austrian troops in the Low Countries resumed the offensive with success. In Italy, the Spanish arms were again victorious; and in Catalonia, the prince of Condé was compelled to raise the siege of Lerida on the seventeenth of June. The treaty between Spain and Holland naturally hastened the movements of the plenipotentiaries at Munster; but nearly at the same period an event took place in one of the remote possessions of the Spanish monarchy, which again tended to divide those forces which don Louis de Haro had been labouring so indefatigably to concentrate. The power of the Spaniards in Sicily and Naples had remained firmly established, notwithstanding all the evils and difficulties attending vice-regal sway, and the individual faults and errors of many of the governors. The wars commenced and carried on by the count duke Olivarez had, however, tended greatly to drain the country both of its population and of its resources.

The count de Monterey, during the period of his government, had therein levied forces almost as large as those supplied by Spain itself; and his successor, the duke of Medina de las Torres, so far exhausted it, in order to supply Olivarez with the means of carrying on the war, that on leaving it he declared, with feelings which we may hope were most painful, that the kingdom of Naples was no longer in a condition to afford a livelihood to four respectable families. The next governor, however, added a capitation tax; and the duke of Arcos, who succeeded him, on his being obliged to rescind the decree for that impost, prepared, if possible, to grind the Neapolitan people still more severely. His conduct, it would appear, was tyrannical and unjust in the highest degree. The French harassed the coasts; the Spanish

troops had been principally withdrawn from the kingdom ; the most favourable opportunity for revolt presented itself to the people of Naples ; and on an ill-advised and cruel tax being laid upon fruit, the people showed unequivocal signs of breaking out into a general insurrection.

At the same time that matters were proceeding in this course at Naples, under the government of the duke of Arcos, the marquis de los Velez had driven the people of Sicily into actual revolt. The news from Sicily encouraged the Neapolitans ; and the celebrated insurrection of Massaniello broke out, to increase the difficulties of the Spanish government. This first effort, however, was very soon put an end to, by the death of Massaniello, with regard to whose fate a variety of stories have been told, but who would appear to have been assassinated while in a state of mental insanity brought on by over-excitement both of mind and body. The volatile people instantly flocked with base submission to the duke of Arcos ; but a re-action took place, and for a considerable time Naples fluctuated between submission and insurrection, till at length, shortly after the viceroy had signed a convention with the people, which in fact placed the whole power of the state in their hands, a Spanish fleet, despatched in haste to the aid of the viceroy, appeared in the bay, having on board 5000 veteran troops, and consisting of forty ships of war. This armament was commanded by the famous don John of Austria, then a mere youth ; and a number of negotiations took place with the people, which terminated, however, in an attack being made upon the city, both by sea and land. The proceedings of don John proved as ineffectual to bring back Naples to obedience as those of the viceroy had been ; but with more skill and wisdom, while he attempted to force the capital to return to submission, he took measures for putting down the spirit of revolt in the provinces, which measures were not only successful in their primary object, but greatly aided his operations against the revolted city.

In the mean time, rendered but the more desperate by the severity which was shown to them, the Neapolitans, after giving way to various excesses, declared themselves a republic, and invited the duke of Guise, then at Rome, to put himself at their head, and take the title of Doge. He readily accepted the offer, and it is supposed entertained the purpose of soon changing the small and transitory power of doge into the absolute authority of a king. But every thing tended to overthrow his hopes. France gave him no efficient assistance; and when he arrived at Naples, having proceeded thither in a felucca with only six attendants, he found the city nearly in a state of famine, no disciplined force to oppose the enemy, and a people turbulent, volatile, and impatient of all rule. For a short time, however, the first appearance of the duke, and some wise and energetic measures which he adopted, produced more favourable appearances. He reduced the people to some degree of submission; he organised a regular force; he re-established the administration of justice; and he obtained several advantages in the field, which diminished the scarcity under which the city suffered. But neither his military nor political talents were equal to those of the Spanish commander, don John, who, finding that he had not a sufficient force to reduce Naples by arms, determined to have recourse to intrigue.

The duke of Arcos was removed from the post of viceroy; the minds of the people were soothed with promises of pardon, on submission to the Spanish authority; divisions were wrought in the councils of the Neapolitans; and the military efforts of the duke of Guise on the Spanish fortified posts were skilfully met and defeated. Every thing was thus soon changed, and a prospect of the immediate re-establishment of the rule of Spain was obtained, when an ill-judged and unfortunate measure had very nearly banished all these favourable appearances, and restored its preponderance to the party of the duke of Guise. Re-

ports of the progress of don John reached the court of Madrid, and suspicions, probably communicated by the former viceroy, were entertained with regard to the views of the young commander himself upon the kingdom of Naples. Under these circumstances, measures were immediately taken to guard against any ambitious projects on the part of don John ; and while don Louis de Haro exerted himself indefatigably to raise reinforcements, in order to enable that prince to reduce Naples to subjection, he strove to counterbalance his power in that kingdom, by appointing count Oñate, then ambassador at Rome, viceroy, in place of Los Arcos.

No two characters could be more opposite than those of Oñate and don John. The latter was mild, though determined ; prudent, though bold ; and always endeavoured to gain the affections by gentleness and generosity, of those whom he had compelled to submit by his courage and genius. It was said of him, by some writer whose name I now forget, that after having conquered, his sole design seemed to be to make people forget that he had conquered. Count Oñate, who was the son of that nobleman, so strongly opposed to don Louis de Haro in the commencement of his administration, was not less courageous than don John, and even more cautious. He never forgot in the commencement of his enterprises what was to follow after ; and even in the very heat and hurry of moments of great agitation and difficulty he was always sufficiently master of himself to seize upon any thing which might produce future advantages, while he concealed from others the purposes which actuated him. Joined to this cautious and self-possessed disposition, however, was one of the most remorseless and sanguinary hearts that ever beat within a human bosom.

As don John still retained the command of the army, it may easily be conceived that the union of two such opposite men, in the conduct of one enterprise, was likely to be any thing but cordial ; and if it were unwise to join any two persons in the execution of an

enterprise which required the most persevering unity of purpose and endeavour, it was still more unwise to select two characters between whom there was scarcely the possibility of an agreement. The duke of Guise instantly perceived the error that don Louis de Haro had committed, and his hopes rose immediately, from the prospect of disunion between the two Spanish commanders. But the wisdom and prudence of don John obviated the evils which the mistake of the minister might have produced. He received the nobleman appointed to deprive him of political power with every testimony of respect and attention, and prepared to give him the fullest assistance in his efforts to reduce the capital to obedience. Whether in consequence of his own cautious calculations, or in compliment to don John, does not appear ; but Oñate immediately proposed to pursue the same quiet plan of intrigue to which the young commander had already had recourse. Don John, however, asserted that the time was now come for action ; and the arrival of the reinforcements prepared by don Louis de Haro seconding his arguments, it was determined to make an attack upon the malecontents of the city, from all the fortified points still in the hands of the Spaniards.

Combining art, however, with determination, the two Spanish commanders carried on their intrigues so skilfully with the Neapolitans, that several of the heads of the very faction which had overthrown the power of Spain were gained over. The duke of Guise was seduced out of the town to make an attack upon the island of Nisita ; and during his absence one of the gates was treacherously opened to the Spaniards, who entered and took possession of the town with scarcely any opposition. The light Neapolitans hailed as deliverers those they had so lately stigmatised as bloody tyrants. The duke of Guise was shortly after taken prisoner and conducted to Spain ; and, while don John of Austria sailed to Sicily, of which island he was appointed viceroy, the count Oñate remained at

Naples, where he signalised a government of five years, we are told, by the execution of nearly 18,000 persons.

The revolt of Sicily and Naples had, of course, embarrassed the proceedings of don Louis de Haro in regard to Catalonia. Much of the money and many of the troops which he had destined for the reduction of that province, had been diverted to effect the subjection of Naples, and all the supplies and reinforcements which the revolted kingdoms had so long furnished to Spain, had of course been cut off during their internal commotions. The Spanish monarchy also was deprived of another support in her wars with the French, by the conclusion of the famous treaty of Munster, which took place in the same year as the revolt of Naples, and which, by establishing a peace between France and the empire, left Spain without any ally to carry on the war against her great and powerful rival. The plenipotentiaries by whom this treaty was concluded had laboured also to bring Spain into the pacification, but the terms demanded by France were exorbitant; and don Louis de Haro, with all that firmness and determination which generally accompanies a mild and equable nature, persisted in refusing concessions, which seemed to him equally derogatory to the honour of Spain and dangerous to her political situation.

There can be no doubt, however, that, in the exhausted state of the Spanish monarchy, if France had been free to exert her whole power in the contest, Spain must have succumbed with disgrace and loss; and the policy of don Louis would not have been hazardous alone, but insane. But there were peculiarities in the situation of France at the time which don Louis had marked with keen attention, and from which he gathered sufficient hopes of intestine commotions in the enemy's country to justify him in prolonging the war. Resistance to the authority of the queen-regent and her minister had already begun in the French capital. The impetus given to the movement of the government by the vigorous administration of Richelieu

had by this time ceased ; and that most base, selfish, and pitiful of all civil wars, the war of the Fronde, was upon the very eve of commencing. With such materials before him, don Louis de Haro did not doubt that he should be able to give the French minister sufficient employment in France itself, to render ineffectual all his efforts against Spain ; and the result proved that he had not miscalculated in this instance, although the famous battle of Lens gave another bad augury for the success of the Spanish arms against those of France.

At the same time, however, his attention was called to some subjects of discontent amongst the Spanish people, by the discovery of a conspiracy against the life of the king himself. The history of this transaction is involved in much obscurity, and many extraordinary and romantic circumstances are related in regard to it, on which we cannot place any very great reliance. During his whole life, Philip IV. had been addicted to licentious amours, carried on, not alone amongst the higher classes of society in his capital, but also amongst the depraved actresses for which Madrid was notorious. Corrupted in his youth by vicious and designing men, he had been taught to give unbridled way to his passions : since the death of his wife, a variety of mistresses had shared in his favour ; and in the end, a woman of Moorish birth is said to have obtained possession of the monarch's affections. Such a fact in itself was sufficient to create the greatest scandal in the Spanish capital. His subjects were not at all disposed to interfere with the pleasures of their king so long as his licentiousness was guided by an orthodox taste ; but to choose a Moorish concubine became a high offence : and immediately the fact was known, a thousand wild and incoherent reports were spread in regard to the powers which his infidel mistress exercised over the mind of the monarch. She was accused of dealing in magic, of seducing the king into acts of a dark and impious nature ; and in short every rumour was circulated against her and Philip which could excite the fanaticism of a bigotted and superstitious people.

While this was going on, a number of discontented nobles resolved to take advantage of the agitated state of the popular mind to execute a scheme for the assassination of the king. The principal leader of the conspirators was a bold, rash man, of the name of don Carlos de Padilla ; but there were joined in his plans the dukes of Içar, and Abrantes, and a number of other noblemen possessing great wealth, and much influence at the court of Philip himself. The object of these men was to separate Arragon from the rest of Spain, to render it a distinct kingdom, and to place on the throne thereof the duke of Içar. The infanta, Maria Theresa, was to be carried into Portugal, and married to the prince of the Brazils ; and Portugal and the rest of the Peninsula, with the exception of Arragon, was to form a new kingdom for the house of Braganza. To effect these objects, Philip was to be surrounded while hunting, and assassinated ; but ere the attempt was made, the conspiracy was discovered in a manner which is very differently narrated by different writers. The most probable account, however, is, that Carlos de Padilla imprudently disclosed a part of the plan to his mistress, who, horrified and alarmed, hastened to don Louis de Haro, and communicated to him the intelligence. The minister immediately took means to insure the safety of the king, and caused the various members of the conspiracy to be closely watched. It was not long, however, before the imprudence of don Carlos afforded the means of clearly proving his guilt. His brother, don John de Padilla, was then at Milan ; and in a letter, which was intercepted by the government, the chief of the conspirators disclosed to him not only the whole scheme which had been agreed upon, but the names of all the persons implicated, and the shares they were to take therein. The facts were easily established against the criminals, but neither don Louis de Haro nor the king himself were fond of bloodshed. Two only, don Carlos de Padilla and don Pedro de Sylva, were selected for execution, and the sentence of the others was mitigated to perpetual imprisonment.

The efforts of Spain to regain possession of Catalonia had, as we said, languished during the insurrection of Naples, but the efforts of France, on the contrary, had been greater than before. After Condé had retreated from Lerida, the count de Marsin had remained at the head of the French troops, but laboured under suspicions of disaffection to the government, and he was speedily afterwards superseded by marshal Schomberg, who, receiving the appointment of viceroy of Catalonia from the regent of France, assumed the command of the army as a matter of course. Schomberg immediately began to act vigorously against the Spaniards, and laid siege to Tortosa, which he took by assault, while the government of Philip was still embarrassed with the revolt of Naples. In the following year, however, some slight advantages were gained by the Spanish army in Catalonia, but not sufficient to give any satisfactory prospect of ultimate success. The efforts of the Spanish minister—although his mind was now tranquillised upon the subject of Naples, and though the victories of the marquis Caracena in the Modenese left him without inquietude for the north of Italy—were, nevertheless, still drawn away from Catalonia, by advantageous opportunities in the north, too promising to be resisted. The disaffection which existed in France was daily increasing. The war of the Fronde had already broken out; the chief of the malecontents had applied to the governor of the Low Countries for aid against the court; and don Louis de Haro exerted every energy to increase and perpetuate the civil dissensions of the enemy's country, while he laboured to recover the Spanish possessions in Flanders which had been captured by France in times of internal tranquillity. The archduke was directed to give every assistance and succour to the rebels of the French capital; and in the mean while he took advantage of the divisions in that kingdom to recapture a number of towns upon the French frontier.

Thus, during the year 1649, the war in Catalonia languished on the side of France, from the effects of

intestine strife, and on the side of Spain also was neglected, in order to seize favourable opportunities in the north. The plague, too, which had broken out in Andalusia, spread the apathy of terror through the whole country; and a pause seemed to take place in the efforts of the two nations, so long engaged in active and virulent hostilities against each other.

In the midst of these events, the archduchess, Maria Anne of Austria, arrived at Milan, on her way to the Spanish capital, where she was about to be united to Philip, in the hope of producing male heirs to the Spanish monarchy. She was accompanied as far as the capital of the Lombard states by the king of Hungary, to whom there can be no doubt that hopes, if not promises, had been held out of receiving the hand of the infanta, Maria Theresa. At Milan, the young queen, who had already been married by proxy at Vienna, was obliged, according to the custom of the Spanish court, to dismiss all her German attendants; but the king of Hungary sent forward messengers to Madrid to ask permission of the Spanish monarch to accompany his sister on her journey into Spain, in order to conclude his marriage with the infanta. Don Louis de Haro, however, who never lost sight of the probability of bringing about a peace with France, by uniting the Spanish princess with the young monarch of that country, took care to frame some plausible pretext for declining the visit of the king of Hungary, and the young queen proceeded on her way alone.

The opening of the year 1650 proved favourable to Spain in various ways. The brief period of tranquillity which had been obtained in France, after the conclusion of the war of Paris, was brought to an end by the arrest of Condé, Conti, and Longueville: Turenne and others fled to the Spanish governor of Flanders; the princess of Condé escaped to Guienne, and raised the standard of revolt against the court; the divisions which agitated France spread to her armies warring without; and in Catalonia, the duke de Mercœur caused the count de

Marsin to be arrested, on the charge of tampering with his troops in favour of the prince de Condé. Don John of Austria at the same time obtained various advantages on the Italian coast, driving the French from Porto Longone and Piombino, whence, by means of their cruisers, they had almost entirely cut off the communication between different Spanish ports in the Mediterranean. The archduke was still making considerable progress on the side of Flanders, and was quite capable of sustaining himself against France, without any farther assistance from Spain. All these favourable circumstances were not lost upon don Louis de Haro, who now determined to make one great and vigorous effort for the recovery of Catalonia.

The Spanish troops in that province, however, were dispirited and worn out by a long and unsuccessful contest in a country where the inimical peasantry subjected them to daily and hourly attacks ; and it became necessary to place at their head some commander whose military skill and reputation would restore confidence to the troops, while his moderation and mildness of disposition might win the revolted Catalonians to return to their allegiance. Such an officer was found in Francis, marquis of Mortara, who had passed through every grade of the service, was universally beloved by the army, respected generally by the Spanish people, and who, to vigour of intellect and determination, joined all those more amiable qualities which were likely to accomplish the great object of don Louis de Haro's policy — the pacification, rather than the conquest, of Catalonia. The marquis was nominated to the command of the army in Catalonia in the early part of 1650, with the titles of viceroy and captain-general ; but before he set out, to put himself at the head of the forces, he entered into definite arrangements with the minister, in order to insure that his operations might not be rendered unsuccessful by the failure of supplies at the very moment they were most needed. This having been finally settled, he quitted Madrid in the

end of July, and was received by the troops with joy and gratulations.

In taking the command of the army of Catalonia, Mortara found no enemy before him likely to afford any very efficient opposition ; and, unlike most of those who had preceded him, he commenced his operations upon a regular plan. He determined, if possible, to obtain possession of the whole line of the Ebro, and to work for that object till it was accomplished ; neglecting no points upon that line, however unimportant they might seem, nor being diverted from it by any other enterprise however tempting. He thus began the campaign by the capture of Flix, thence proceeded to Mirabete, which he compelled to surrender in a few days, and then laid siege to Tortosa. The duke of Mercœur, who commanded the French army in Catalonia, showed himself incapable during the whole campaign of any great military conception ; and though he made some faint efforts for the relief of so important a place as Tortosa, they proved perfectly ineffectual in disturbing the proceedings of Mortara, who prepared to repel any attack, but continued the siege as vigorously as ever. After having been disappointed in receiving a large convoy of provisions, and having perceived that the French commander, either from his own incompetence or the inefficiency of his force, was unable to give them assistance, the garrison of Tortosa surrendered to Mortara, who immediately advanced to the attack of Cervera, intending to push forward his operations, and to establish a line between Tarragona and the Segré. The capture of Cervera and Baleguer would have effected this object ; and by it a number of towns and villages, which adhered to Spain, would have been protected from the excursions of the French and Catalonians.

In the mean time, however, Mortara, while he thus vigorously pursued his military operations, had not neglected those proceedings which were likely to bring over the revolted population of Catalonia once more to obedience and submission. Don Louis de Haro had

in him found a man perfectly calculated to carry into effect those mild and pacific measures which peculiarly characterised his policy. No severity whatsoever was exercised in the captured towns, although actually in revolt against their sovereign; all persons who were willing to come in and make submission were received without inquiry into the past; the troops were prevented from pillaging and ill-treating the peasantry, though that peasantry might justly be considered as in rebellion; and while the inefficiency of the French measures showed the Catalonians that they could not rely upon the neighbouring country for support and the tyrannic insolence of the Gallic soldiery taught them even to regret their Castillian masters, the military successes of Mortara were calculated to show them that they could no longer resist unaided, and his lenity and mildness gave them every encouragement to submit to their native monarch. Numbers daily came over to the Castillian party; and even where that was not absolutely the case, the spirit of vigorous resistance which oppression and cruelty had engendered was softened and enfeebled throughout the whole of Catalonia.

Mortara, however, was not suffered to complete what his mildness and skill had begun. I am inclined to believe that don Louis de Haro would willingly have continued the supreme power in the hands which had exercised it so wisely; and indeed the pertinacity with which he adhered to Mortara's plans, as well as the rewards with which he afterwards loaded him, showed the respect and esteem which he entertained for that great general. But the pride and the affection of the king for his natural son, don John, led Philip to wish that the ultimate conquest of Catalonia should be reserved for him; and the minister was always too wise to oppose the monarch when his will was consistent with the safety and welfare of the state. That it was so in the present instance no one acquainted with the prudence, genius, and generous spirit of don John of Austria, could at all doubt; and don Louis de Haro

proceeded actively, not only to give effect to his sovereign's wishes, but to take such measures as would insure them the most complete success. He wrote immediately to Sicily, directing don John to set sail with whatever troops he could withdraw from that island, in order to take the command in Catalonia; and for the purpose of swelling his force to the utmost, he made an arrangement for the removal of 4000 German troops from the Milanese to Catalonia.

Don John lost no time in obeying the commands he had received; but before he quitted Sicily, with that prudent foresight which characterised all his measures, he took means to insure constant supplies from that fertile island, to enable his army to carry on its operations without all the difficulties which had attended the preceding campaigns in Catalonia. He had already cleared the Mediterranean of the French cruisers, which used to harbour at Porto Longone; but finding, on his arrival at Yvica, that an enemy's fleet had for some time infested the seas in that neighbourhood, he sailed in pursuit of it, and after a short but severe struggle totally destroyed it. He then proceeded to Dénia, on the Valencian coast, having learned that the whole of Catalonia was now afflicted with the plague. Leaving a part, if not the whole, of his troops at that place, he himself set out for Tarragona, in order to confer with Mortara on their farther proceedings. Tarragona was then labouring under the pestilence; but Mortara hastened thither to meet don John, and explain to him the plans that he had laid out for the subjection of Catalonia. That commander, however, was not satisfied with the slow advance proposed by Mortara, to whom he represented that he could now command a much larger force; that civil wars and dissensions of all kinds prevented France from affording any efficient aid to the people of Catalonia; that his army would soon be reinforced by 4000 men from Milan; and that the combination of such advantages might never be found again, if they neglected, during the tumults in France,

to attack the Catalonian capital. He proposed, therefore, instantly to lay siege to Barcelona, leaving less important objects to be accomplished afterwards.

Mortara yielded to his reasons ; but it was agreed between them that their determination should be kept perfectly secret, except towards the duke of Albuquerque, whose co-operation with the fleet was absolutely necessary. It would seem, that even from the king and don Louis de Haro the intentions of the generals in Catalonia were studiously concealed ; for, in speaking afterwards of the enterprise in one of his despatches to don John, the monarch clearly implies, that the siege of Barcelona would not have met with his approbation at that time, if it had not been actually undertaken before he was aware of it. The place, however, was invested by Mortara, while don John remained at Tarragona, endeavouring to stop the ravages of the plague in that city. He was afterwards attacked with symptoms of the malady himself, and in order to recover from its effects retired to the kingdom of Valencia ; but during all this time his correspondence with don Louis de Haro was carried on, pressing the court of Spain to furnish him with the necessary sums for the payment of his troops, and to raise fresh levies as speedily as possible.

For that purpose don Louis made every exertion in his power, labouring with that quiet, but indefatigable, activity which he displayed through his whole administration ; but still, at the end of a long and exhausting war, the supplies which don John demanded were difficult to be procured. An important advantage, however, was obtained by don John in the beginning of the siege, which greatly tended to dispirit the citizens of Barcelona. The duke de Mercœur had quitted Catalonia some time before, after having set the count de Marsin at liberty, when Condé was himself freed by Mazarin. De Marsin had then remained in command of the troops, and had thrown himself into Barcelona ; but Condé having again quarrelled with the court, and broken out into open revolt, De Marsin, as his partisan, was far

more inclined to hasten to Guienne and join his great leader, than to carry on the defence of the Catalonian capital, for a government to which he was in fact opposed.

Whether any negotiations took place at this time between the Spanish ministers and the disaffected general of the French does not clearly appear; but one thing is certain, he was permitted to quit Barcelona unopposed, and to pass through the Spanish territory into France. He afterwards sent to request that all the French prisoners taken in the siege should be despatched after him; and Mortara was authorised by the Spanish ministry to comply, making a stipulation, however, that they were never to be employed, during the war, against the king of Spain. The truth is, that by this time don Louis de Haro was in active communication with all the French malecontents. Money and troops had been promised to Condé in order to carry on the war against the court; and though his intrigues with the rebels in the north had not produced such successful results as he could have desired, the actual revolt of a great part of the south of France caused a tremendous diversion in favour of Spain. All the French troops, therefore, which could be withdrawn from Catalonia, in order to reinforce the army of the prince de Condé, produced a double advantage, which don Louis de Haro was most eager to seize.

In the mean time the siege of Barcelona proceeded; and don John having recovered, appeared in person before that city. But notwithstanding all the efforts made by the Spanish minister to furnish full employment for the French troops in their own country, marshal de la Mothe, though attached to the party of Condé, was induced to take the command of a French force, and contrived to throw himself into Barcelona. La Mothe brought with him, however, all that vacillating, unprincipled tergiversation, which distinguished the leaders of the Fronde. The Spanish government,

well aware of his attachment to the prince of Condé, determined immediately to use all means for the purpose of inducing him to follow the plan pursued by the count de Marsin. For this purpose, don Louis de Haro kept up a constant correspondence with don John; and after having ascertained positively, from some intercepted letters, that the French marshal was as much dissatisfied with the queen and Mazarin as ever, don Louis proceeded to point out, with injunctions of the strictest secrecy, to the two Spanish commanders, the precise measures which were to be taken in order to open a private communication with La Mothe.

Cartels, for the exchange of prisoners, were then daily passing between the Spanish lines and Barcelona; and don John was directed, on one of these occasions, to request that the French marshal would send a confidential person to a particular spot in the lines where such transactions usually took place, in order to receive a communication of great importance. If this were acceded to, don John was to endeavour to persuade La Mothe by every means in his power, amongst which bribery, but very ill concealed, by the pretence of paying expenses, was one, that Barcelona was in fact untenable; and that it would be much more prudent and consistent for him to withdraw with his troops from that city, and join the French and Spanish army under the prince de Condé. Should he refuse to do this, the next object to be obtained, according to don Louis's despatch, was, that the marshal himself should withdraw from Barcelona, and range himself with the disaffected in France, even leaving his troops behind, if any scruples of conscience prevented him from endeavouring to lead them to the aid of Condé.

Don Louis, however, need have entertained no fear that scruples of any kind would affect the conscience of La Mothe. Those were days in which every sort of honesty was scoffed at by the moralists of the Fronde; and through the whole of the transactions which

followed, though the French marshal fought like a common soldier, and bled in a thousand sallies for the defence of Barcelona, he seems only to have considered what he could get for selling it, or his troops, or himself, to the enemy. He willingly opened the communication with don John which that commander required, and carried it on for a considerable length of time, endeavouring, it would appear, to gain the highest terms for himself, by negotiating both with the court of France and with the court of Spain. His cunning, however, was not too much for the acuteness of don John, who suddenly, on discovering from some of the intercepted letters, the double dealing of the French marshal, raised his demand to the immediate surrender of Barcelona; while, at the same time, he held out to La Mothe the offer of a very large sum in case of his compliance.

In the mean time, he rendered the blockade of the place more strict. A squadron of French ships sent to the relief of the place was driven off; and Mortara was despatched to reduce all those smaller places on the coast of Catalonia, from which supplies were poured into the besieged city by means of the small coasting vessels that escaped the vigilance of the Spanish fleet. Mortara, in this enterprise, was as usual successful; and, following the constant injunctions of don Louis de Haro, he treated every place, whether it made a voluntary surrender, or yielded only to force, with mildness and compassion. Multitudes of villages and thousands of the peasantry were thus induced to desist from rebellion; and some of those who had been most active in promoting and keeping up the spirit of revolt now despaired to effect any thing against such means as were employed, and strongly advised the provisional government of Barcelona to surrender while favourable terms might yet be obtained.

The question of submission was now frequently discussed in the council of a hundred, to whom the rule of the city was intrusted by the people. Provisions

were growing scarce; no succour could be expected from without; and don John showed the strongest determination to reduce the place by famine. Only two persons continued to oppose the surrender, the commander of the French troops, and the celebrated don Joseph Margarit, governor of the town, who was so deeply implicated in every action of the revolt that his name had been expressly omitted from all offers of amnesty. Perceiving, however, that Barcelona could not be held out much longer, and that his fellow-citizens would infallibly be compelled to yield him to the enemy, Margarit contrived to effect his escape by sea, and after various adventures, arrived within the French pale.

About the same time, La Mothe consented to surrender the town if reasonable terms could be obtained, and a proposal was accordingly drawn up and submitted to don John. That commander had some time previously obtained information of the discussions which were going on in the town; but instead of making any ungenerous use thereof to straighten the place, or hurry on his operations against it for the purpose of urging harsher measures on its surrender, he applied to don Louis de Haro and the king for directions as to his farther proceedings, and laid before the council a sketch of the terms which his information led him to believe the Barcelonese would demand. All parties, but more especially the minister, were inclined to mild measures; and after some correspondence on the subject, don John was left to grant such conditions as the circumstances of the case required.

Shortly after, the proposal of surrender was made; and the mildest terms that it was possible to grant were agreed to; the French were permitted to march out with their arms, baggage, and artillery; and their route having been laid down, were furnished with quarters and provisions till they reached the French territory.* A part

* Between the year 1644 and 1652 La Mothe had been arrested in France on the charge of peculation, imprisoned in *Pierre encise*, and tried, but acquitted.

of the demand made by the people of Barcelona itself was refused ; they having required that all their *fueros* or privileges should be maintained absolutely, and especially that they should be perpetually exempted from receiving any soldiery within the walls of the city. This last point don John positively refused to concede : he granted at once a general amnesty, from which no one was excluded but Margarit, and I believe one or two of the early conspirators. But he pointed out to them the danger of persisting in their other demands ; condescended to argue with them on the unreasonableness of the terms they required from their king ; and advised them, after having accepted the general amnesty, which secured completely their persons and property, to trust to the generosity of the king, and lay before him their claims in the form of a petition. Farther resistance was of course vain ; and on the 13th of October, 1652, Barcelona surrendered, and the French garrison marched out.

It would appear that, notwithstanding the orders and directions which had been given, the king expressed some dissatisfaction at the mildness with which the marquis de Mortara had treated some towns in the north of Catalonia while don John was carrying on the siege of Barcelona ; but his great services and distinguished talents were acknowledged and rewarded, by Arragon and Valencia being added to the province already under his command. With him don John laboured for some time longer to produce the subjection of Catalonia ; and before the close of that year, with the exception of a very few places in the north, the whole of the principality had submitted to its native sovereign. Various efforts were afterwards made by the French, at different times, to recover a footing in that province ; but these were constantly defeated, either by don John or the marquis of Mortara ; and the conquest of Catalonia may be considered to have been effected in 1652.

While these events were taking place within the limits of Spain itself, others had occurred in a distant part of

Europe, destined to affect the Spanish monarchy in a still greater degree. The great rebellion in England had proceeded to the death of the king and the elevation of Cromwell to the supreme sway. Contending with each other unsupported, France weakened by intestine divisions, Spain impotent from exhausted resources, the marine of both countries in a state of total decay, it became the interest of each of the rival powers to court the mighty usurper, who had seized the sceptre, though he had not assumed the crown of the Stuarts. So equally balanced for the time was the power of France and Spain, that don Louis de Haro at once foresaw, that the least advantage thrown into the scale of the enemy would ruin the country which he was striving to support; and from the very first, he determined to seek the alliance of Cromwell, both in order to procure a mighty aid to Spain, and to deprive France of that assistance which would have given her the predominance for ever. Although the means which had placed Cromwell on the throne were abhorrent to all the prejudices and feelings of a Spaniard; although the religion which he professed was the acme of heresy to a zealous catholic; yet don Louis did not scruple to advise his sovereign instantly to recognise the power of the protector, and to acknowledge the commonwealth of England as a lawful and independent state.

Though flattered by this immediate recognition, Cromwell never lost sight of farther advantages to be gained; and determined, it would appear, from the first to link the interests of England to those of France, and to enrich his country by the pillage of a declining state. He made such egregious and absurd demands in return for the amicable offers of the Spanish minister as to show at once his inimical purposes towards Spain. Nevertheless don Louis de Haro did not lose the hope of ultimately gaining the protector, and did every thing that was possible to acquire his friendship. Ambassadors were mutually sent to London and Madrid; and when it unfortunately happened that Ascham, the

British minister, was assassinated in the capital of Spain, don Louis proceeded against his murderers with a degree of rigour and unsparing vengeance which he never displayed on any ordinary occasion.

Cromwell, however, was not to be gained. He had determined, it would appear, upon his course, and very soon made overtures of friendship and alliance to the court of France, which, though received with horror by the queen, whose relations he had expelled from the throne, were more tenderly treated by the minister, who suffered no feelings of any kind, but of self-interest, to interfere with the considerations of policy. British fleets soon appeared upon the coast of Spain, to interrupt the trade and destroy the navy of a country which had offered with sincerity the most favourable terms of alliance, and other squadrons were sent to her Indian possessions to plunder her of territories which she was no longer capable of defending.

Don Louis de Haro temporised as far as possible, unwilling to call upon Spain more active aggressions still, and endeavoured to take advantage to the utmost of the dissensions in France, in order to gain some signal advantages before the alliance between that country and England rendered her power irresistible. Condé was supported with troops and with money ; the count of Marsin was received in Madrid with the highest distinction, and was furnished with an army for the purpose of subduing Guienne ; and the archduke was directed to give every assistance from the Netherlands to the malecontents in the north. But either from the vagueness or impracticability of the count de Marsin's schemes, or the over-cautiousness and feebleness of the Spanish commander who was joined with him, the projects against Guienne failed entirely. Condé, after marching to Paris, and obtaining possession of the capital, was obliged to quit France, and throw himself totally into the arms of Spain ; and all that the archduke could effect in favour of the rebels was to send to their aid the duke of Lorraine, who brought cold inactivity to their councils, and unnerved

even the energy of Condé. The king of France re-entered his capital amidst the acclamations of the people ; and all that Spain derived from the internal dissensions, which had so long torn the neighbouring country, was the presence of Condé and several other skilful generals with her armies in the Low Countries, and a body of 6000 insurgent French under their command. Still this was no slight advantage ; for the archduke governor of Flanders was already on the road to success, had at his command a powerful and increasing army, and only wanted a greater degree of energy and activity to recover all which had been lost upon the French frontier. But at this important moment one of the greatest mistakes which could be committed placed the cold, calculating, and over-cautious count of Fuensaldaña as a check upon the ardent and fiery Condé. It is impossible to suppose that the count was destitute either of military or of political talents ; but he seems from the first to have conceived a jealousy and dislike of the French commander, which gave a degree of obstinacy to the natural slowness and caution of his disposition. Whether his appointment was owing to the recommendation of the archduke himself, or sprung from the partiality with which don Louis de Haro always regarded Fuensaldaña, there can be no doubt this was one of the greatest errors of that minister's government ; a thousand great opportunities were lost ; and all that was done in the Netherlands for several years was to counterbalance the efforts of Turenne, and to keep in check the now undivided forces of the French monarchy.

At length, England adopted more active measures, in consequence of a treaty with France : the fatal battle of the Dunes took place, and the Spanish power rapidly declined in Flanders. At the same time, the worst accounts were received from Italy. The Spanish treasury was utterly exhausted ; and claims for reinforcements and supplies were pouring in at once from the Low Countries, from the Milanese, from Naples, from America, and the West Indies. Never yet had Spain been reduced to such

a state of depression ; and a new attack in a different quarter, where war, it is true, had existed for many years, but where it had lingered in inactivity, now aided to shake the foundations of the Spanish monarchy. Suddenly, the Portuguese, awaking from a state of apathy in which they had long remained, crossed the frontier of their country under the command of Vasconcelos, and laid siege to Badajos, with a force of 10,000 infantry and 3000 cavalry.

When first the news of this invasion was communicated to don Louis de Haro, the minister is said to have refused to believe it ; but when positive information that the siege of Badajos had actually commenced was received by the court, consternation spread through Madrid, and presence of mind was lost by almost every one but don Louis. With the most prompt activity he collected an army ; and believing himself possessed of military skill, to which he certainly had no claim, he put himself at the head of the troops, and began his march to Estramadura. In the mean time Vasconcelos had lost a great part of his forces, some in various attacks upon Badajos, and some by the excessive heat then prevalent on the banks of the Guadiana. On the approach of don Louis, the Portuguese army instantly raised the siege, and began its retreat. This, however, was not effected ere the Castellians could come up with their rear-guard ; and before he could find shelter under the cannon of Elvas, a part of the forces of Vasconcelos had been cut off by don Louis.

Various other advantages were gained by the Spanish minister ; and the formidable aspect which Spain assumed for a time, on the frontiers of Portugal, might have led to very important results, had don Louis been contented with the military glory he had acquired, and, returning to his usual employments, left the command of the army to some more experienced general. Such was not the case, however : elated with his first success, and hoping to strike some blow which might compensate for the depression of the Spanish

power in other quarters of the globe, he advanced and laid siege to Elvas. From confidence in their own strength, the Portuguese had neglected to prepare that fortress for any vigorous resistance; and it is admitted, on all hands, that if don Louis had displayed any military skill, or pressed the place vigorously, it must have surrendered before any force could have come to its assistance.

The Portuguese army had in the mean time separated, and taken refuge in various strong places in the neighbourhood; and the marquis de Viana, with a considerable body of Spanish troops, had passed the frontier of Portugal from the side of Galicia, and had defeated the count of Castel-melhor*, taking Lampella, and besieging Monzaon. Terror and consternation spread throughout the whole of Portugal; the fancy of every man presented to him the hated yoke of the Castillians once more pressed down upon his neck; every one was ready to fly to arms in defence of his country: the queen set the example of energy and determination; and a numerous, though ill-disciplined, army was collected to raise the siege of Elvas.

In the mean time, all the outworks of that fortress had been taken with scarcely any opposition; but the governor, Sancho Manuel, and his garrison expressing their firm determination to bury themselves under the ruins of the town, made a gallant resistance to the Spanish forces. At length, the newly raised Portuguese army under the count of Castañeda advanced towards Elvas, and came within sight of the place, directing its march through some of the neighbouring hills. On the approach of the enemy, don Louis de Haro proposed, in a council of war, that while a part of the forces remained to keep the garrison of Elvas in check, the rest of the army should be drawn out of the

* The forces of Castel-melhor were very inferior to those of his adversaries, even by the accounts of the Spaniards; one of whom says, the army was "muy inferior en numero al nuestro;" and adds, "En el primer combate quedó indecisa la victoria; en el segundo fueron vencidos los Portugueses."

lines in order to attack the Portuguese in the open field ; but this movement, though it had been practised a thousand times in Flanders, the Spanish officers now held to be impracticable, and the proposal was consequently abandoned.

The army of don Louis accordingly remained in the lines, and were there attacked by the Portuguese, who in a very short time put the left wing of the Spaniards to the rout. The right wing, however, sustained itself for some time longer, till the marquis of St. Germain, who commanded in that quarter, was wounded in the head, and carried from the field. The defeat of the Spaniards was then rendered complete ; the Portuguese poured into the trenches, and disorderly flight spread through the whole ranks of the besieging force. The Portuguese followed up the pursuit as far as Badajos, the walls of which place afforded an asylum to a great part of the fugitives. The lowest computation of the Spanish loss upon this occasion is 4000 men ; and a number of prisoners, amongst whom were several grandees of Spain, gratified the animosity of the Portuguese no less than the relief of Elvas.

Don Louis de Haro, who was in the left wing of the Spanish army, undoubtedly displayed no great personal courage upon the occasion, flying as soon as his troops were thrown into confusion, without attempting to rally them, or to retrieve the fortunes of the day by making as firm a stand as possible, supported by the right wing, which was still unbroken. The whole faults and misfortunes of the battle have been generally attributed to him ; and the want of skill and resolution which he certainly did show have probably caused the errors of all the other generals to be laid to his account. Amongst other things, he has been accused of suffering the Portuguese to surprise him in his lines, and to have viewed the combat only from a distance ; but on comparing the various accounts of the battle, it would seem that he was not at all taken by surprise ; that he proposed, as I have said, to march out and meet the enemy,

but was over-ruled by the other generals, which fact a Spanish writer brings forward as a proof how far military science had already declined in Spain ; and farther, it is shown, that, instead of viewing the combat from a distance, he remained with the left wing till it was broken, though he then certainly fled from the field as fast as his horse could carry him.

Such a disastrous day might well make him doubtful of his reception at Madrid ; but, nevertheless, on his arrival at the court, his generous master received him with every sign of regard and affection ; exerted himself personally to give him consolation under his misfortune, and treated him in public rather as if he had gained a victory than had lost a great and important battle.

Transactions, however, were now about to follow in which the minister was to appear in his own element. Since the conclusion of the treaty of Munster, negotiations had scarcely ever ceased, with a view to effect a peace between France and Spain. During the civil wars in France, Mazarin, embarrassed with difficulties of every kind, had eagerly sought an event which would have enabled him to direct his whole strength against the malecontents of the kingdom. His proposals, however, had been rejected by Spain, and the war continued without disadvantage to France. On the elevation of cardinal Chigi to the chair of St. Peter, under the title of Alexander VII., that pontiff, who had become thoroughly acquainted with the questions at issue between the two countries, by the share he had taken in the negotiations of Munster, proposed to monsieur de Lionne a congress, under his mediation, for the re-establishment of the peace of Europe. Mazarin, however, doubting the effect of Spanish influence, should the conferences be held at Rome, proposed the appointment of some other place ; and after various despatches on the subject, the matter dropped for the time.

In the following year, however, although by this time the arms of France were in a high career of success, Mazarin, anxious to terminate the war advantageously, and

to obtain for his master the hand of the infanta, determined even to open a negotiation for peace in Madrid itself; and monsieur de Lionne, recalled from Italy for the purpose, was despatched in disguise to the court of Spain, with fuller powers to treat than, perhaps, were ever before given to a secret envoy. They were to the following effect:

"I give power to the sieur de Lionne, counsellor in my council of state, to adjust, conclude, and sign the articles of a treaty of peace between me and my brother and uncle, the king of Spain; and I promise, on the faith and word of a king, to approve, ratify, and execute all that the said sieur de Lionne shall have agreed to in my name, and in virtue of the present power. Done at Compiègne the 1st of June, 1656. (Signed) Louis."

Furnished with this authority, and accompanied by a gentleman of the household of Fuensaldaña, Lionne set out for Madrid, and, disguised as a merchant, reached the Spanish capital in safety, where he exhibited his powers to treat, and immediately entered into negotiations with don Louis de Haro. The conferences continued three months; and were carried on with such profound secrecy, that although it was asserted of don Louis * that he never ventured to act upon his own responsibility without consulting the council of state, no one except the count de Peñaranda and the king were aware of the pending negotiations, or of the presence of a French envoy in Madrid. In these conferences, all the principal points of a treaty of peace appear to have been settled. France relaxed many of her former demands; and the Spanish minister did not continue to hold the same haughty language, which the memory of past power and influence had caused the ministers of Spain to use in all preceding negotiations.

The great obstacle to the conclusion of a peace, however, were the claims of the prince de Condé. Although extremely desirous of terminating the war, don

* By Lord Clarendon.

Louis de Haro, with a generous determination from which he never swerved, maintained the interests of the prince, who had rendered such services to the Spanish government, with as much zeal and fidelity as those of his sovereign. He demanded that it should be stipulated in the treaty in clear, and distinct terms, that the king of France would grant to Condé pardon and oblivion for all the past, would receive him into favour; would re-establish him in all his estates, honours, and dignities; and would restore to him all the charges and governments which he possessed in France previous to his having thrown himself into the arms of Spain.

On this the Spanish minister positively insisted; Lionne, however, would not comply, repeating, he says, more than twenty times to don Louis, "Pass me those three words, *charges and governments*, and the peace is concluded." Nothing, however, would tempt don Louis to abandon the cause of Condé, and upon this the negotiations of 1656 were broken off. It must nevertheless be remembered, that even had not this obstacle occurred, it is very likely that many others would have presented themselves, as the questions of the marriage of the infanta with Louis XIV., and of the non-interference of France in the affairs of Portugal, still remained undecided.

Still, however, negotiations of various kinds continued; and in the midst of the disasters which occurred to Spain during her last campaigns in the Netherlands, Condé more than once expressed a generous hope that the Spanish minister would not suffer his interests to impede so desirable an object as a general pacification. Even had don Louis been inclined to take advantage of the prince's disinterestedness, there remained the difficult question of the marriage of the infanta, in regard to which the court of Spain was as yet by no means decided. That it was the most secure policy for Philip to give his daughter to the young monarch of France neither the king nor his minister in any degree doubted; and the objection founded on her being heir-apparent to

the throne had now been done away by the birth of male heirs. But at the same time the alliance was eagerly solicited by Austria, which, recovered in a degree from the exhaustion of a thirty years' war, now offered, as the price of the infanta's hand, to renew hostilities against France, and to march an army of 60,000 men into Flanders. The offer was tempting to Spanish pride, and to the natural affections of a prince of the house of Austria; but at the same time was to be considered the exhausted state of Spain, and the hopelessness of her being able to prolong the war without plunging her into farther embarrassments, even if supported by the whole power of the empire.

Under these circumstances, the king of Spain remained in a state of doubt and hesitation, while don Louis de Haro, struggling resolutely to gain some military advantages, at the same time held out hopes of the infanta's hand to both the competitors, and endeavoured, by exciting one against the other, to obtain the most favourable terms that it was possible from either. The policy of don Louis de Haro, however, was met by the policy of Mazarin; and although the Spanish minister had learned with satisfaction that Anne of Austria, the queen-mother of France, was most eagerly desirous of uniting her son to the infanta, and though he had derived hopes from that knowledge of obtaining ultimately more favourable terms, he was suddenly surprised by hearing a rumour that Louis XIV. was about to marry immediately the princess Margaret of Savoy. The tidings were at first doubted at Madrid; but within a very few days after, information was received of the young king of France having set out with his whole family for Lyons, in order to meet the duchess of Savoy and her daughter, and conclude the arrangements for this newly proposed alliance.

Don Louis now saw all his policy likely to suffer a defeat; and though he was not in Madrid himself at the time, he caused don Antonio Pimentel to set out instantly for France, and endeavour to break off the proposed marriage between Louis and Mar-

garet, by offering peace and the hand of the infanta upon favourable terms. This was all that Mazarin desired ; and by the time that don Louis had arrived in Madrid, after his unfortunate campaign against Portugal, the preliminary negotiations for the famous treaty of the Pyrenees had been arranged between the two courts of France and Spain. The first sketch of that treaty was drawn up at Paris, and ratified at Madrid ; but, as it would appear, this sketch was couched in very general terms, so as to leave Mazarin the opportunity of asserting, that much more was promised on the part of Spain than really was promised, — an opportunity of which I am inclined to believe, from the whole context of his letters, that he did not fail to take advantage.*

In the course of the month of July in the same year †, don Louis de Haro proceeded to St. Sebastian, for the purpose of conferring with Mazarin at the frontiers of the two kingdoms. At the same time, the French minister arrived at Bayonne, and some difficulties arose in regard to which should render the first visit. Mazarin on his arrival was ill of the gout, and don Louis immediately sent don Antonio Pimentel to compliment him on his arrival at Bayonne, which was returned by Mazarin sending Lionne to St. Sebastian. In the first instance, the French minister assumed a high tone, and demanded absolutely, both that don Louis should come into France to visit him, and that no change whatsoever should be made in the terms which he asserted had been arranged at Paris, especially regarding the reconciliation of the prince de Condé. To this conduct don Louis opposed nothing but slowness, civility, and determination. He remained quite quietly at St. Sebastian ; besought Mazarin on no account to hurry his proceedings till he was quite recovered from the gout ; paid him no visit, but avoided in the slightest degree recognising any pre-eminence on

* See letters of Mazarin at the end of this life.

† A. D. 1659.

the part of France ; and, by the display of a calm and phlegmatic sort of indifference, completely got the better, in the first steps, of all Mazarin's pretensions.

Pressed by the queen to conclude the peace as soon as possible, and most anxious himself to accomplish it, the French minister at length proposed that the two first visits should be dispensed with, and that a building having been erected on the Isle of Pheasants, in the middle of the Bidasoa, the conferences should immediately commence on that neutral ground between the frontiers of the two kingdoms. This was accordingly agreed to ; but nevertheless don Louis de Haro did not in the slightest degree hurry his proceedings, rather, on the contrary, procrastinating, as he perceived more and more clearly the eagerness of Mazarin and the queen to conclude the alliance ; sending a thousand complimentary messages to the French minister, and exhausting his patience, with the arrangement of a thousand trifles, which were evidently studiously sought for, with the purpose of rendering the cardinal more impatient.

At length, on the 13th of August, 1659, the two ministers met on the island as had been agreed, and remained in conference together for five hours. It would be impossible to follow the negotiations which now took place, through all the turnings and windings into which the finesse of Mazarin led them. Such details would more properly be admitted into a life of Mazarin ; and the letters of that minister himself show, that from the very first it was his determination to cheat the Spaniards as far as possible, especially in regard to that part of the treaty which concerned the prince de Condé.* To all the finesse of Mazarin, don Louis continued to oppose procrastination, calm caution, and thoughtful consideration ; and by this means, though his intellect undoubtedly was very much inferior in acuteness and penetration to the French minister, he yet contrived to gain much greater advantages for his sovereign than could have been possibly expected.

* See his letter to Le Tellier of the 14th of August.

Step by step the various articles were arranged. The marriage between the infanta and Louis was determined on ; and it was agreed, in order to prevent the jealousy of other powers, that Maria Theresa, on becoming the wife of Louis, should make a renunciation of all her contingent claims to succeed her father in his dominions ; —a renunciation which Mazarin, don Louis, and the two kings, were all equally aware was no more than an empty farce. A small dowry was promised with the young queen, and in return, all that the French still retained in Catalonia, a great portion of their conquests in the Netherlands and in Italy, and a variety of other advantages, were granted to Spain, as well as the inestimable blessing of peace. France, at the same time, agreed to abandon Portugal to her fate ; and did not make any bold attempt to obtain from the king of Spain the pardon of Margarit or any other of the Catalonian exiles.

The conduct of the Spanish minister was very different in regard to Condé, whose rights and pretensions still formed the greatest difficulty in the negotiation. Nothing could shake don Louis's firmness on this point ; and he insisted constantly, either that the king of France should restore the prince to all his places and governments, or should suffer the king of Spain to bestow upon him certain territories, to be erected in his favour, into a separate sovereignty. Mazarin would consent to neither of these proposals, though he endeavoured, as he had designed from the first*, to take advantage of the latter, in order to gain something more from Spain, by suffering her to bestow upon Condé considerable territories on the side of the Netherlands, which were afterwards to be taken from him by the king of France. Don Louis, however, would consent to nothing which could be so perverted from its purpose ; and in the midst of these negotiations, Condé, having heard that he was still the only obstacle to the conclusion of a peace, sent a letter under his own hand to don Louis,

* See letters at the end of this life.

beseeching him to make no more efforts in his favour, and assuring him that he would approve whatsoever he did in his behalf. Don Louis, however, though he yielded the contested point with regard to the governments, &c., still extorted from Mazarin the most advantageous terms for Condé that could be obtained; paid the prince from the exhausted treasury of Spain a large sum as some compensation for the losses he had sustained; and before he would sign any treaty whatsoever, submitted the conditions to Condé for his approval.

This was doubtless politic as well as just; and it certainly raised the Spanish diplomacy high in the opinion of all Europe. The conduct of don Louis towards the duke of Lorraine also, though undoubtedly dictated purely by motives of policy, were such as to secure for Spain the reputation of never abandoning those who suffered in her cause. The duke, at the head of his small army, had far more embarrassed than aided the Spanish forces; never exposing either his person or his troops where he could help it, and using the war as a pretence for plundering all parties. Pillage had been the sole support of his troops; but when it was found that they existed for no other purpose than pillage, don Louis de Haro had determined to put a stop to so evil a system, and ordered the arrest of their leader, as the captain of a band of brigands. This had been executed with skill and promptitude; and the duke had been sent a prisoner to Spain, where he remained confined in the alcazar of Toledo till the middle of the year 1659. He was then liberated, at the earnest solicitation of Mazarin*, just before the commencement of that minister's conferences with don Louis de Haro. But no sooner had those conferences begun, than Mazarin's purpose of plundering the duke of his territories became apparent, while don Louis de Haro exerted himself to the utmost to withhold them from the grasp of France.

* The cause of the duke of Lorraine was espoused by Mazarin, in order to gratify the duke of Orleans.

During the course of the negotiations, an event occurred which spread great alarm in France lest the treaty should thereby be impeded or broken off. One of the sons of the king of Spain was taken ill and died, leaving only one male heir of a feeble constitution between Maria Theresa and the throne of Spain. The Spanish government, however, acted with good faith, and swerved in no degree from the conditions which it had previously made ; although it is evident, from the letters of Mazarin, that he became more anxious than ever to conclude all the arrangements, and to pass over any trifling difficulties and demands made by the Spaniards, rather than delay a marriage, the ultimate result of which he almost prophetically foresaw would be the establishment of the Bourbon race upon the throne of Spain.

At length the treaty, containing 124 articles, was concluded, and the marriage of Louis XIV. with the infanta took place immediately ; don Louis de Haro acting as proxy, in the first instance, for the king of France. To both countries that treaty was advantageous ; and though, as St. Evremond observes, it might have been rendered in many respects much more advantageous to France, yet to have demanded that it should be so, Mazarin must have risked a continuation of the war ; the union of Spain and the empire by the marriage of the infanta with an Austrian prince ; a renewal of hostilities with the emperor ; the loss of his own favour with Louis and the queen-mother, and the accumulation of infinite financial difficulties upon France.

At the same time, great honour is due to don Louis de Haro, who, with forces so exhausted as scarcely to be able to maintain the power of Spain in any one of her remote possessions, threatened on her Portuguese frontier by a powerful and active enemy ; with a bankrupt treasury, a country in a state of the greatest decay, and with no one advantage but the hand of the infanta ; obtained from the wily and politic Mazarin the restitution of so many places which had been taken by France ;

high and honourable terms for the revolted subjects of the French crown ; an engagement, however, badly kept, that France should abandon her ally, the king of Portugal ; the integrity of the absolute kingdom of Spain, and the preservation even of Franche Comté, lying in the heart of the French monarch's dominions.

The observations of the two ministers upon each other, in regard to their diplomatic communication, are not a little curious. Mazarin accused don Louis of tardiness, procrastination, and dictatorial haughtiness. Don Louis, on the contrary, remarked, that Mazarin had one great fault as a diplomatist, viz. that he suffered it to be too apparent that he was always seeking to cheat.

The king of Spain evinced his gratitude to don Louis de Haro by raising the marquisate of Carpio into a dukedom of the first class, and by bestowing upon his minister a title which he, at least, well deserved, that of Prince of the Peace ; and it was now universally acknowledged throughout all Spain that the country would have been utterly ruined had it not been for the treaty so skilfully conducted by the minister.

During the negotiations which took place for the arrangement of this famous treaty, don Louis had shown no want of skill or penetration whatsoever. Knowing well the diplomatic art of the person to whom he was opposed, he had met Mazarin with calm and cool consideration, examining every proposal with care and suspicion, and criticising even the words of each article with severe accuracy. But yet during the very time that those negotiations were proceeding, Mazarin was deceiving him in the grossest manner, and acting with a twofold degree of baseness, which the honourable and upright mind of the Spanish minister wanted the capability of conceiving. The cardinal astonished all Europe by the treacherous abandonment of the king of Portugal, by agreeing in express terms to leave the weak ally of France to his fate ; and, though don Louis perhaps scorned him as much as any one for this dereliction from all honourable principle, yet he never appears to have entertained a

suspicion that while Mazarin was thus courting public reproach, he did not in the slightest degree intend to commit the impolitic act which he had promised to perform.

To the very scene of their conferences, however, Mazarin was accompanied by a Portuguese agent: while he was signing an engagement on the part of France to give no aid whatsoever to the king of Portugal, he was promising the Portuguese envoy immediate assistance and support; and while he was professing towards the king of Spain the most friendly feelings and purposes, he was encouraging his enemy to raise volunteers in the very camp of his own sovereign. Several hundred French officers were enlisted in the service of the king of Portugal, while the two courts of France and Spain met together to celebrate their alliance; and there can be little doubt that a part, if not the whole, of the French troops that served in Portugal under marshal Schomberg were paid by France, in direct contravention to her most solemn engagements.

Such perfidy could, of course, neither be foreseen nor guarded against; and don Louis de Haro did not live long enough to witness the full effects of Mazarin's treachery. His first object, however, after his return to the Spanish capital, was to raise a force and to provide means for the entire subjugation of Portugal. He was, it would seem, extremely anxious to make a great effort for that purpose, while the Portuguese were still unprepared to resist; and it is not improbable that had his views been followed in this instance, much greater success might have attended the Spanish arms. Don John of Austria, however, who had been called from the Low Countries to take the command of the army against Portugal, represented both to the king and the council of state that it would be much better to suffer the country to recover from the effects of a long and exhausting war, and to allow the peace with France to be so far confirmed as to justify the Spaniards in withdrawing a part of the troops from the Low Coun-

tries. This advice, supported by much specious reasoning, was followed ; and though an ineffectual expedition was made towards the close of 1660, nothing very important was attempted against Portugal till the following year.

In the mean while Charles II., who had endeavoured in vain to induce the ministers of France and Spain, during their conferences on the Bidasoa, to espouse his cause, and re-establish him in his dominions, had been recalled by his own subjects, and was seated by them upon his paternal throne. Don Louis, who before had treated him with much kindness, now at once restored all the English vessels which had been taken by Spain during the war with the protector. Charles nevertheless allied himself with Portugal ; and that country took means every day to strengthen herself against the menaced attack of Spain. The English fleets prepared to support those of Lisbon. French officers disciplined and instructed the Portuguese levies ; the fortresses on the Spanish frontier were repaired and provisioned ; and when at length don John and the duke of Ossuna, at the head of two considerable armies, entered Portugal, they found the country ready for resistance to a degree which they had not at all anticipated. The duke of Ossuna was worsted in almost all his attempts. Don John gained but few and unimportant advantages ; and don Louis de Haro, mortified at their ill success, and disappointed in his expectations, did not fail to blame severely the conduct of both generals. Don John, on his part, returned to Madrid, irritated by his own failure ; and in return for the censure of the minister, complained loudly of the want of supplies, and of neglect on the part of don Louis. A misunderstanding was thus springing up between the two most influential persons in Spain, when don Louis de Haro was suddenly attacked with inflammation of the lungs, and died on the 17th of November, 1661, in the 64th year of his age.

It has seldom been the fate of any minister, whether good or bad, to be generally esteemed and loved by that

nation the affairs of which he directed. More clear-sighted and sensible of evil than of good, the vulgar many readily learn to hate or to despise, but are with difficulty taught to reverence and to love, especially where the object is placed above themselves, and forced to act upon one opinion where many exist, and where the interests, passions, and prejudices of multitudes are involved. Nevertheless, don Louis de Haro is said scarcely to have left an enemy behind him in Spain; and to have died generally esteemed and beloved by all classes of the people, from the sovereign, in whose service he had passed his existence, to the lowest individual in that country, which, by the mixture of caution, mildness, activity, and courage, he had saved from the very brink of ruin, and re-established in peace and security.

Don Louis de Haro left behind him also a character in Europe for prudence, wisdom, and political sagacity, which the examination of after years has not at all diminished. That his mind was of a very vast or comprehensive character has never been asserted; and the only thing that has been urged in diminution of his just fame appears to have been, that the measures which he employed to save his native country were forced upon him by circumstances, he having seen the evil results constantly produced by an opposite course. It must be remembered, however, in justice to him, that he always from the first advocated the same means that he himself practised with success, even at a moment when the very opposite course was considered to be the only rule of policy, and when his opposition to his uncle, Olivarez, was likely to be personally detrimental to himself. It must be remembered, also, that he foresaw the consequences, and distinctly predicted them, of many of the count-duke's most erroneous proceedings; and it is therefore but fair to attribute to the exercise of a sound judgment, and a considerable portion of political foresight, the course which he advocated from the first, and which he followed, with perseverance, till he obtained the result he anticipated. In many of his efforts, it is true, he was

frustrated ; in many points his policy was doubtful, and in many it was narrow and confined. The shackling don John of Austria by the appointment of count Oñate ; the neutralising the energies of Condé by the superintendence of Fuensaldaña, were very similar actions and were both unworthy of a great mind.

From his first entrance into office, don Louis de Haro seems to have laid down two general principles in regard to his personal management of the affairs of state : in the first place, to shield himself on all occasions where it was possible from popular odium, by referring every question to the council of state, and making each counsellor give his opinion in rotation in a signed note ; and in the second place, to attribute to the king every successful operation, taking to himself not the slightest degree of credit ; but as soon as ever a successful result was apparent, bringing the king forward upon the stage as if the whole transaction had been his. In regard to the councils, however, whenever any great and important point was concerned which required despatch or secrecy, he abandoned his plan and took the responsibility upon himself, as in the case of the embassy of Lionne, and in the treaty of the Pyrenees. His two principal advisers, with whom he generally consulted in private, were Giorgio de Gongora, a celebrated jurist, by whose advice he regulated almost all the internal affairs of Spain, and the count de Peneranda, through whose means he carried on many of the transactions relating to foreign policy, but who does not appear to have possessed so much power over him as the former.

In manners he was calm, quiet, and placable ; gentle in demeanour as well as in disposition ; courteous to all men ; patient in hearing, slow in reply, and yet speaking with clearness, accuracy, and fluency, when obliged to deliver an opinion, sometimes perhaps saying too little, but never being known to say too much. He had a great horror of bloodshed ; and seldom showed any severity except when absolutely compelled to do so ; and though he evinced no want of firmness and determin-

ation, he always leaned more to conciliation than to force. He was naturally, we are told, of an indolent and melancholy temperament; but from the moment he entered upon office he showed nothing but the most indefatigable activity; and in all the reverses which Spain endured he never suffered himself to be disheartened or depressed. His disinterestedness was universally allowed; and in all his transactions, his firm and strong integrity gave a dignity to his character, and an authority to his opinions, which well supplied the place of brilliant talents or of specious eloquence.

Although so constantly occupied with the affairs of external policy, he did not neglect to strive for the internal improvement of the country; he endeavoured to regulate the police, and did away with a great many irregularities; he strove to encourage agriculture, and patronised various arts by which he hoped to improve the condition of the people. He was, like his uncle Olivarez, and like every distinguished statesmen, eminent for his protection of literature and the fine arts. The only relaxation which he seems to have permitted himself was, when he threw open the doors of his house to the most distinguished poets, painters, and philosophers of Madrid, and entertained them with splendid hospitality, while the king himself frequently appeared in the halls of his minister and his friend, and laid aside the reserve of the monarch to mingle with the distinguished and wise of his dominions. Under Olivarez, and don Louis de Haro, the arts may be considered to have reached their highest degree of perfection in Spain; and the appearance of Velasquez, blazing with jewels and covered with orders of knighthood, at the marriage of the infanta to the king of France, as one of the high officers of the Spanish monarch's household, might show what were the rewards bestowed on those who distinguished themselves in other paths than the iron march of war, or the tortuous ways of political intrigue. By his wife, Catherine of Cordova, don Louis had several children; but I am

led to believe that his family became extinct in the year 1799.

I add three letters* of Mazarin in regard to the negotiations preceding the treaty of the Pyrenees, which tend to elucidate the most important transactions in the life of don Louis de Haro ; but which, if inserted in the place where that transaction is mentioned, would have interrupted the thread of the narrative :—

“ Villefagnan, le 8 Juillet, 1659.

“ A M. LE TELLIER.

“ Je vous fais cette lettre pour faire savoir par votre moyen, au Roi et à la Reine, une aventure qui m'est arrivée : car pour les autres affaires, je remettrai à vous écrire de Châteauneuf, où je serai demain, avec dessein d'y séjourner un jour.

“ Cette aventure, dont je suis certain que vous ne serez pas moins surpris que je l'ai été, est que nous avons ici Caillet, un des secrétaires, et des plus confidens de M. le Prince, que vous savez que son maître fit dernièrement passer en Espagne par mer. Voici comme la chose est arrivée.

“ Dès que D. Louis a vu le traité de paix, et en quels termes étoient conçus les articles qui regardent les intérêts de M. le Prince, et les précautions que j'avois prises d'empêcher que le Roi Catholique n'eût pu donner de récompense audit sieur Prince, avec lesquelles il eût moyen de nous faire du mal ; la première chose à laquelle il s'est appliqué, a été de renvoyer en toute diligence ledit Caillet, cinq ou six jours avant qu'il fit repartir le courier qui devoit nous rapporter la ratification, afin que M. le Prince n'eût la première nouvelle de ce qui s'étoit passé en ses intérêts que par eux ; craignant peut-être que s'il l'apprenoit de notre côté, cela ne l'obligeât à nous faire d'autres propositions qui nous pussent tenter, en quoi je puis dire que ledit Seigneur D. Louis me connoît bien mal. Caillet a donc été s'embarquer dans un vaisseau à Saint Sébastien ; mais la mer et les vents lui ont été si contraires, qu'après plusieurs orages qui lui ont fait courir la côte pendant plusieurs jours, il a été rejeté dans le port même de Saint Sébastien dont il étoit sorti. Et voyant que le mauvais tems continuoit, et peut d'apparence qu'il dût changer, il s'est avisé d'aller trouver M. le Mareschal de Grammont, se flattant peut-être que l'amitié qu'il peut avoir pour M. le Prince l'obligeroit à lui donner le moyens de passer sûrement et secrètement par terre. Ledit

* The letters I have not thought fit to translate, as the peculiar style and expressions of Mazarin cannot properly be rendered in any other language, and are in themselves extremely significant.

sieur Maréchal en a pourtant usé autrement, et me mande que Caillet lui a fait la justice d'avouer lui-même qu'il ne pouvait faire autre chose en pareil cas, que de me l'envoyer, comme il a fait, avec le lieutenant de ses gardes. Ledit Caillet m'a donc vu, et je ne vous redis pas les choses que j'ai pu tirer de lui dans cet entretien, parcequ'en le questionnant comme j'ai fait, il vous sera facile de les tirer vous-même pour en rendre compte au Roi. Ce qui m'a paru de plus important, c'est qu'il connoît que de quelque façon que les Espagnols dorent la pilule, son maître est abandonné d'eux. Pour le reste, s'il m'avoit dit vrai, M. le Prince ne se seroit pas entièrement laissé aller à tous les sentimens de Lenet : car il me voulut faire croire que sa résolution étoit de ne pas accepter le gouvernement de Flandres, connoissant bien que ce poste étoit incompatible avec la possession de ce qu'il prétendoit en France ; et pour la souveraineté, il dit que son maître la vouloit bien tirer des Espagnols, mais avec la pensée d'en user après comme le roi voudroit, et de venir en France, vivre en tel lieu que sa Majesté lui prescrirait. Voilà ce qu'il y a de plus essentiel, dont je me rapporte à ce qui est de la vérité, ne faisant pas grand fondement à ce que dit un homme qui craint, quoique je croye avoir reconnu qu'il m'a parlé assez sincèrement.

“ J'ai fort examiné quel conseil je devois donner au Roi en cette recontre, c'est-à-dire, savoir si on doit retenir ledit Caillet, ouvrir les dépêches dont il peut être chargé, et tâcher de les faire déchiffrer, ou bien que sa Majesté use de sa générosité, et le laisse passer, comme la paix étant déjà faite, puisque la ratification d'Espagne est venue ; et présupposant que ledit sieur Prince ne manquera pas de l'accepter, voire que le Seigneur D. Louis ne lui dépêche ledit Caillet, que pour le porter et l'obliger à cette acceptation. Il y avoit beaucoup de raisons, de part et d'autre, à considérer toutes assez fortes : mais après les avoir bien examinées, je me suis à la fin déterminé à conseiller à sa Majesté le parti de la bonté et de la générosité. J'ai fait réflexion, comme je viens de dire, que la paix se peut dire faite, et que ce seroit faire une espèce d'affront au Seigneur D. Louis, que je suis sur le point de voir bientôt, de douter qu'un homme d'honneur comme je le tiens, voulût dans une même conjoncture, conseiller au Roi son maître de ratifier un traité de paix, et en même tems faire des choses contraires qui le détruisent. J'ai considéré d'ailleurs qu'en usant d'autre manière, il paroîtroit dans le monde, qu'ayant en ce point-ci, par un traité solennel et public, tout ce que nous avons demandé, on voudroit encore persécuter ledit sieur Prince jusqu'aux dernières extrémités. Comme en effet, si le Seigneur D. Louis, après l'envoi des ratifications, m'avoit écrit

qu'il a jugé à propos de dépêcher Caillet, ou tout autre, à M. le Prince, pour lui faire savoir les résolutions qui ont été prises sur ses intérêts, je ne vois pas qu'on eût pu s'empêcher, avec bienséance ni justice, de le laisser passer par la France, de sorte que n'y ayant en cette affaire autre incident qui diffère de ce que je viens de dire, si ce n'est que D. Louis ne m'en a pas écrit, et que Caillet a déjà voulu prendre le chemin de la mer, qui ne lui étoit néanmoins pas moins sûr en vertu de la seule suspension d'armes, laquelle ne permet pas qu'on prenne les vaisseaux l'un de l'autre ; tout cela, dis-je, joint ensemble, m'a fait déterminer à dire au Roi que mon avis est qu'on laisse passer ledit Caillet : ce n'est néanmoins que mon sentiment particulier, et il faudra que vous en sachiez plus précisément les intentions de sa Majesté, lesquelles seront exécutées selon qu'il ordonnera. J'ajouterai encore que le sieur Antonio Pimentel, qui m'informe de tout ceci, prend grande part, et m'a fait des instances très-pressées, pour supplier le Roi de permettre audit Caillet de se rendre auprès de son maître, me faisant connoître qu'il sembleroit un peu dur en Espagne que l'on fit arrêter, ou que l'on empêchât par d'autres moyens, après que la paix est signée et ratifiée, une personne que le Seigneur D. Louis dépêche à M. le Prince pour lui en donner part, et le porter à s'accommoder à la résolution qui a été prise sur ses intérêts.

“ Je vous dirai en outre, que venant de voir ledit Caillet tout présentement, et l'ayant interrogé sur les dépêches qu'il avoit, il a ouvert devant moi une lettre de Dom Louis pour M. le Prince; laquelle n'est que de créance, se remettant à ce que Lenet lui fera savoir par d'autres voies, et vous la pourrez voir si vous voulez.

“ J'avois oublié de vous dire, que ledit Caillet proteste que son maître étant à présent libre de faire ce qu'il voudra sans qu'on puisse lui reprocher d'avoir manqué au traité qu'il avoit fait avec les Espagnols, mettra toutes pièces en œuvre pour rentrer dans les bonnes grâces du Roi, et par une autre voie que celle des Espagnols.

“ J'ai cru qu'il étoit à propos d'envoyer Méré pour avoir soin de vous mener ledit Caillet ; et comme je désire qu'il s'en revienne me joindre en diligence, et qu'il sera bon que vous donniez quelqu'un à Caillet qui l'accompagne jusqu'à la frontière, le Roi trouvant bon de le laisser aller, je vous prie de commettre à quelqu'un de vos couriers de faire cela.”

“ De Bayonne, le 27 Juillet, 1659.

“ A M. LE TELLIER.

“ Caillet m'a fait de grands complimens de la part de M. le Prince, sans pourtant me rien dire de positif sur son accom-

modement, mais bien, qu'à quelque prix que ce fût, il vouloit retourner en France, espérant que sa Majesté auroit la bonté d'adoucir les conditions de son retour, sans se tenir à ce qui est expliqué avec tant de rigueur dans les articles du traité de paix qui le concernent. Il a voulu entrer en raisonnement sur le détail de cette ouverture : mais je l'ai coupé court, lui déclarant que je n'avois nulle négociation à faire avec M. le Prince, que tout ce qui le regardoit avoit été ajusté à Paris avec le plénipotentiaire d'Espagne, et ratifié à Madrid ; et qu'ainsi c'étoit une affaire achevée, ne restant autre chose à faire à M. le Prince, que de témoigner ses bonnes intentions pour le service du Roi, et de faire en sorte que chacun en fût persuadé ; car en ce cas je serois le solliciteur auprès de sa Majesté pour lui procurer en toutes rencontres des marques de sa bienveillance. J'ai dit audit Caillet que je voyois bien que la diligence avec laquelle il étoit revenu pour me remercier de la part de son maître de l'assistance que je lui avoit donnée, afin qu'il se pût rendre auprès de lui, étoit un pur prétexte pour porter la réponse à D. Louis de Haro, de ce qu'il étoit allé proposer de sa part à M. le Prince ; mais que nonobstant cela, je le laisserois passer, parce que je savois bien ce que j'aurois à l'instance de M. le Prince. D. Louis de Haro vouloit apporter le moindre changement à ce qui avoit été déjà réglé.

“ Et parce que j'ai connoissance que diverses personnes de Paris et d'ailleurs ont fait savoir audit prince que j'avois une telle appréhension de me séparer de D. Louis sans perfectionner l'ouvrage de la paix, à cause du mauvais effet que cela produiroit en France et partout ailleurs, qu'absolument je consentirois à ce qu'il me pourroit demander en faveur de M. le Prince, j'ai jugé à propos de prendre les devans, et non seulement de dire à Caillet, mais à D. Antonio Pimentel, qui étoit ici, que si sur ce fondement ou sur d'autres je reconnoissois que D. Louis voulût exiger de moi quelque chose au préjudice de ce qui a été arrêté et de ce qui est raisonnable, je ne ferois autre réponse que m'en retourner tout court, et je laisserois à juger à la chrétienté qui des deux auroit été cause de la rupture de la paix.

“ J'ai reconnu par quelque mot que Caillet a lâché en passant, que l'intention de M. le Prince seroit de tirer quelque récompense en places des Espagnols, et d'en traiter avec le Roi : mais ayant fait semblant de ne l'entendre pas, il n'a pas enforcé la matière.

“ Je trouvai en arrivant ici, Dom Antonio Pimentel, qui m'a rendu une lettre fort obligeante de D. Louis de Haro, et me fit de sa part toutes les instances imaginables, de n'en vouloir

point partir que je n'eusse absolument recouvré ma santé; et il me fit après des propositions pour notre entrevue, lesquelles étant différentes de celles qu'il m'avoit faites à Paris, il ne me fut pas difficile de lui faire connoître qu'elles n'étoient pas justes; et après plusieurs discours, je lui donnai pour dernière résolution que, m'avancant à St. Jean de Luz, ou à un village qui est encore plus près de la frontière au-deçà de la rivière, D. Louis de Haro me viendrait le premier, après quoi je lui rendrais la visite à Iron*; et qu'ensuite nous pourrions faire un pont, chacun à son côté, qui aboutirait à une île qui est dans la rivière, laquelle n'est à personne, ou on pourroit bâtir, comme il avoit proposé, des huttes dans lesquelles nous pourrions faire nos entrevues, à condition que j'y recevrais tous les traitemens que je pouvois désirer. Il s'en retourna avant hier au soir à St. Sébastien, étant convenu de m'apporter la réponse demain à St. Jean de Luz. Et cependant j'ai envoyé M. de Lionne faire des complimens de ma part à D. Louis, pour répondre à la civilité qu'il m'avoit faite, me dépêchant ici ledit sieur Pimentel.

" Mais mon malheur veut que je sois toujours plus tourmenté de la goutte; et je vous avoue que la mortification que j'en reçois en cette conjoncture me donne beaucoup de chagrin, et qu'elle me fait encore plus de peine que mon mal.

" Il est bon que vous sachiez que Caillet n'est pas passé à Péronne, de sorte qu'il n'est pas l'un des deux couriers dont vous m'avez écrit: car ledit Caillet n'a trouvé personne qui lui ait rien dit, et est venu ici sans aucun obstacle."

" De St. Jean de Luz, le 14 Août, 1659.

" A M. LE TELLIER.

" J'écrivis avant hier à M. de Lionne, qui étoit avec M. de Pimentel à Hiron, une lettre si forte sur les longueurs qui se recontoient à pouvoir commencer notre première entrevue, qu'elle obligea Dom Louis, dès qu'il en eut su le contenu, à donner des ordres très-pressans pour faire achever toute la nuit ce qui restoit à faire de leur part au bâtiment de l'île, et en tout cas de convenir, en quelque état que les choses fussent, de nous voir dès le jour suivant. Cela fut hier exécuté, je puis dire sans vanité, avec assez de lustre et de pompe de notre part. Il ne me reste pas assez de tems pour vous en pouvoir mander les particularités. Il suffira de vous dire avec modestie, pour ne prendre nul avantage sur les autres, que la dignité de notre maître y fut assez bien conservée. Nous fûmes cinq heures ensemble, pendant quoi les Espagnols de la suite dudit Seigneur Dom Louis furent les premiers à rompre le concert qui avoit été fait, que les uns ne passe-

roient pas dans les appartemens des autres, sur ce que nous avions appréhendé D. Louis et moi; que de mêler d'abord soit ante François avec soixante Espagnols en une longue conversation, il ne s'y pût passer quelques discours de dégoût pour les uns ou pour les autres; et par cette raison on avoit fait une séparation d'ais, en sorte qu'ils ne se pouvoient pas même voir; mais comme j'ai dit, et ce que l'on auroit peine à s'imaginer, la rupture de ce concert commença par l'inquiétude et l'impatience des Espagnols qui franchirent toutes les barrières pour voir mon appartement, où toutes les chambres étoient assez proprement et richement tendues, et pour se venir mêler avec nos François, que l'on avoit réduits pour ce jour là au nombre de soixante de part et d'autre. Vous pouvez croire que les nôtres ne manquèrent pas aussitôt de leur rendre la pareille avec joie, et ce que nous n'avions osé, hazarder de peur de désordre finit, Dieu merci, parfaitement bien, car ce ne furent des deux côtés que grandes civilités, et tout cela se passoit sans que Dom Louis et moi en sussions rien dans notre chambre commune: en sorte que quand, nous étant levés, nous voulûmes faire entrer chacun ses amis, pour les présenter à l'autre, on trouva presque tous les Espagnols chez moi, et tous les François chez lui, et tous entrèrent pêle-mêle de part et d'autre, et il y eut de nouveau de grandes embrassades et civilités. Le Seigneur D. Louis, qui appréhendoit extrêmement au commencement de les mettre ensemble, fut extraordinairement surpris de cette sorte d'irruption, ce qui m'obligea à lui dire devant tous, qu'il sembloit que Dieu ne vouloit pas seulement la pacification des deux royaumes, mais l'amitié sincère des deux nations, et que quand nous ne serions pas à la veille de voir accomplir cette paix si désirée de tout le monde, la manière dont les François et les Espagnols agissoient de leur pur mouvement nous devoit obliger à apporter toutes les facilités possibles pour hâter la conclusion de ce grand bien.

“ Notre conférence, comme vous pouvez juger, fut en général et indistinctement sur tous les points de la paix: il est vrai que les discours qui furent tenus sur celui de M. le Prince nous occupèrent plus que tous les autres ensemble. Comme c'est une matière dont j'ai eu tant de fois l'honneur d'entretenir leurs Majestés à fond, il seroit superflu de vous dire maintenant le détail de notre conversation pour leur en rendre compte; car ce ne seroit à peu près que les mêmes choses, quoique Dom Louis me parla avec grande force pour obtenir en faveur dudit Prince quelque chose de plus qu'il n'a été arrêté par le traité. Il le fit pourtant en termes de grande retenue et discrétion, et j'oserois dire sans présomption que je

le payai de si puissantes raisons, et si en foule l'une sur l'autre, pour lui faire connoître que le Roi n'y pouvoit jamais, ni devoit consentir, qu'il n'eût pas le mot à y répliquer.

“ Je ne manquai pas de faire à Dom Louis les complimens du Roi et de la Reine pour le Roi son maître, à quoi il correspondit de sa part autant bien que je le pouvois désirer, disant en avoir ordre exprès de sa Majesté Catholique. Il s'étendit fort sur les louanges particulières de la personne du Roi, et m'en parla en termes que je vous avoue qui m'attendrirent extrêmement. Je ne fis pas semblant de remarquer un mot qu'il me jetta en passant, que le Roi étant jeune, il étoit mal aisé que sa Majesté n'eût quelque inclination particulière, et je ne relevai point la chose : du reste, il me parla du mariage comme d'une chose sûre et sans difficulté, car en y discourant sur le sujet de la paix, de l'amitié qu'il falloit établir entre nos maîtres, il ajouta, *qu'ils ne sont pas seulement oncle et neveu, mais qu'il sont à la veille d'être père et fils.*

“ Pour revenir au point de M. le Prince, qui est le seul où tout pourroit échouer, il me semble avoir suffisamment reconnu qu'en tenant bon, comme je suis bien résolu de faire, la chose passera à la fin comme elle a été arrêtée par le traité, le Roi consentant seulement de sa part qu'ils puissent donner à M. le Prince de l'argent et quelque terre ouverte. Voilà à mon avis par où nous pourrons en sortir, quand nous voudrons nous en tenir là.

“ Mais cela même m'a fait raisonner à part, moi, plus profondément que je n'avois encore fait, sur une pensée dont je crois avoir discoursu quelquefois avec vous, et en avoir aussi parlé à leurs Majestés, et sur laquelle je vous prie en tout cas, et pour tout ce qui peut arriver, de me faire savoir les intentions de leurs Majestés, après leur avoir communiqué la chose, et les avoir très-humblement suppliées d'un grand secret qui ne soit pénétré de qui que ce soit, afin que je ne fasse rien, comme il est juste, qu'après en avoir sù leurs sentimens et reçu leurs ordres.

“ Le point est d'examiner bien à fond, savoir, s'il seroit bon pour nous de tâcher de profiter de cette conjoncture, où les Espagnols montrent tant d'envie de faire de grandes choses pour M. le Prince, vraisemblablement avec bien plus de passion de n'être pas pris au mot, et que la France même les en empêche, qu'avec un véritable désir de les lui accorder : pour, dis-je, nous prévaloir des mêmes choses avec un très-grand avantage pour la France, en accordant audit sieur Prince de notre part quelqu'autre grace qui ne nous feroit nul préjudice, ou pour le moins qui seroit au même tems réparée par

d'autres choses qui vaudroient incomparablement mieux, et qui seroient plus solides, et d'une durée éternelle pour la monarchie.

“ Je m'explique davantage, et dis ; savoir, si nous pouvions en echevant ce traité tirer des Espagnols des pièces aussi considérables que le sont, par exemple, ou Aire ou St. Omer et leurs dépendances, ou Cambray et le Cambrésis, ou Charlemont, Philippeville et Mariembourg, et peut-être Avesnes, en toute souveraineté, en accordant audit sieur Prince, ou à M. d'Anguien la charge de Grand-Maître et le gouvernement de Bourgogne et de Berry, comme le possède aujourd'hui M. d'Epéron, ce qui en effet ne seroit lui accorder que les mêmes choses qu'avoit son père, et avec lesquelles il se voit qu'il ne seroit pas en état de faire grand mal ; savoir, dis-je, si nous devrions entendre à ce parti, ou même le promouvoir nous-mêmes, pour le faire réussir, auquel cas nous embarraserions et déplairions peut-être plus aux Espagnols que nous ne faisons en leur donnant moyen de se tirer d'affaires avec M. le Prince, sans qu'il leur coûte aucune place, ni autre chose que de l'argent. Je serai bien aise que vous me fassiez savoir au plutôt là-dessus les sentimens ou les intentions de leurs Majestés, auxquelles je me conformerai, comme je dois, sans m'engager cependant à rien que je n'ai reçu de vos nouvelles. Je vous dirai seulement que si on pouvoit assembler dans un conseil les personnes du Royaume les plus sensées, il n'y en auroit aucune qui ne fût d'avis de la chose : en mon particulier je la croirois aussi fort avantageuse ; néanmoins je ne ferai rien, comme j'ai dit, sans en avoir su les volontés du Roi, et reçu le pouvoir, dont peut-être les Espagnols, quand je l'aurai eu, seront les premiers à m'ôter le moyen de tirer les avantages que je viens de dire.

“ Il y a apparence que par ce moyen on pourroit prendre plus de confiance en M. le Prince revenant en France, et lui en nous ; puisqu'ayant été l'instrument de donner un si grand avantage à la France, il croiroit avec raison d'y être regardé de meilleur œil, et de pouvoir se rétablir plus facilement dans l'honneur des bonnes grâces de leurs Majestés.”

CARDINAL DUBOIS.

BORN 1656, DIED 1723.

WILLIAM DUBOIS, famous as the minister of the regent, duke of Orleans, during the minority of Louis XV., was the son of an apothecary in very indifferent circumstances, in the small town of Brives la Gaillarde, in the Limousin. After preliminary studies, the course of which we do not know, some friends of his family having held out the hope of obtaining for him a bursarship at the university of Paris, his parents sent him to the capital to pursue his fortune, at the tender age of twelve years. The bursarship, however, was not obtained, and the young Dubois, without the means of subsistence or of acquiring knowledge, of which he seems to have been most anxious, gained admission to the college of St. Michael, upon condition of acting as servant to the principal; and he pursued his studies therein with zeal and success. He soon acquired a sufficient degree of knowledge to enable him to instruct others, and he went as preceptor to the house of a Parisian tradesman named Maroy*, with whose son he remained for some time. He thence removed to the house of the president de Gourgues, of whose son he also became the preceptor.

How or why he quitted this employment does not appear; and even in regard to the next step which he took in his progress towards higher employments, there are many discrepant accounts to be found in the writings of his contemporaries. By some he is represented as having gone from the house of the president de Gourgues

* The account of the early life of Dubois, as given by Duclos, is clearly shown to be incorrect. He is there represented as studying at Brives, and becoming preceptor to the son of the president De Gourgues, before he had been at the college of St. Michael. Duclos also affirms, that he was privately married before he came to Paris.

to that of the marquis de Pluvant ; while others declare that he became an inmate of the dwelling of the curé de St. Eustache, who employed him partly as a scribe and partly as a valet de chambre. It is added, that he there met with monsieur de St. Laurent, and this account is confirmed by Duclos ; but I am inclined to believe that both statements are in some degree true : and that it was from the curé of St. Eustache that he obtained an introduction to the marquis de Pluvant, with whose son he undoubtedly remained for some months.

At the house of St. Pluvant, Dubois was much more likely to meet with St. Laurent, and to attract his attention, than with the curé of St. Eustache ; and it is not at all impossible, that by this course he obtained his first entrance into the house of the duke of Orleans. The prince, who afterwards became regent under that title, was then in his mere youth, and had already had the misfortune to be subjected to the tuition of more than one governor. Marshal Noailles, marshal d'Estrades, the duke de Vieuville, and the marquis d'Arcy, had one after the other been appointed to superintend his education, and had died so rapidly, as to cause Benserade to say jestingly, that it was very extraordinary they could never bring up a governor for the duke de Chartres. The under governors were La Bertière and Fontenay ; but the immediate instructor of the young prince, under the title of preceptor, was monsieur de St. Laurent, a man well calculated in every way to inspire him with the sentiments that might become a prince and a man of honour. To his example and his precepts, and to a heart naturally generous and just, the future duke of Orleans owed all that was good and great in his character ; but to the mistake of St. Laurent also, in regard to the abbé Dubois, that prince, in all probability, might attribute the utter want of moral principle which he displayed through life.

What were the qualities which attracted so upright and dignified a man as St. Laurent towards the abbé, it is difficult to say; but certain it is, that by him Dubois was introduced into the house of the then duke of Orleans, and employed in giving some inferior instruction to that prince's son; or as some assert, merely in copying out clearly the themès which the duke of Chartres had composed. In this occupation he remained for some time, insinuating himself into favour both with the boy whom he had to instruct, and with the under governors, on whose will the continuance of his services depended. Nor was he without opportunities of displaying his high literary acquirements, as well as a refined taste in every thing that concerned the arts.

Acute, penetrating, and never forgetful of his own interests, Dubois easily read all the secret cabals which ruled the house of his pupil's father. Perceiving that that prince, generally distinguished by the name of Monsieur, was entirely governed by the chevalier de Lorraine and the marquis d'Effiat, he applied himself earnestly to gain their good opinion; and following, with an extraordinary similarity, the same course as his political rival Alberoni, took his first steps towards favour and power by rendering himself in some degree a domestic buffoon, and dedicating himself to the amusement, and perhaps to the pleasures, of those who were destined to raise him above themselves. By these means, that is to say, by the display of talents which he really possessed, by agreeable manners, by light and ever ready wit, and by subserviency, which hesitated at no kind of employment, he had prepared the way for his own rise; and on the death of St. Laurent, which happened not long after, the duke of Orleans was easily persuaded not to appoint in a formal manner any new preceptor for his son, but to leave the functions of that office to be executed by Dubois, who, as far as learning and talent went, was certainly well qualified to fill it.

In every other quality, Dubois was wanting ; utterly without moral or religious principles, he seems to have asked himself by what means he could render his influence permanent with his royal pupil ? He must have been well aware that the ascendancy of talent in communication with a prince was rather likely to injure than to serve him. Had he possessed virtues and high principles also, the combination would have insured respect and admiration as the strongest basis for the influence he wished to raise ; but destitute of such qualities, and knowing that to rival or to excel his master, either in learning, talents, or wit, was not the way to win his regard, he determined to debase the mind of his pupil to a level with his own, and to deprive him of the power of contemning his vices by communicating them to the prince himself. He first took pains to instil into the mind of the young duke that most dangerous of all opinions, that virtue is in reality a mere name : he taught him to hold his fellow-creatures in sovereign contempt, and to believe that there are but two classes of men, knaves and fools. To season this doctrine to the palate of youth, Dubois took care that the excitement of passion, and the demoralising influence of voluptuous indulgence should not be wanting ; and from a very early age, we have every reason to believe, that he became the guide and preceptor of the duke de Chartres in the ways of licentious intrigue, as well as in the paths of literature.

Lemontey, indeed, passes over this part of Dubois' life in terms of doubt ; and yet it is a subject in regard to which all contemporary accounts concur, affirming that the preceptor acted absolutely as pander to the youth committed to his charge. He thus gained great influence over the young prince, into whose mind he had taken care to instil those principles, which guarded the preceptor from the contempt ; on the part of the pupil, that must otherwise have followed such conduct ; but at the same time he took measures to attract towards himself attention of a different kind from those above him ; and both by displaying his own brilliant eru-

dition, and by publicly bringing forward the duke de Chartres, to show the rapid progress that he was making under his instructions, he acquired a reputation for learning and zeal which he well deserved, while he concealed the more base and degrading proceedings in which he was engaged.

In the end of the year 1691, these efforts to gain the notice of the king as well as of monsieur, took effect. Louis XIV. had remarked not only the proficiency which the duke de Chartres had acquired under the charge of Dubois, but also the influence which the preceptor had gained over his pupil. The monarch had about that time determined, if possible, to effect a marriage between his natural daughter, mademoiselle de Blois, and his nephew, the duke de Chartres. The young prince, however, looked up to his mother with great veneration and regard ; and that mother was one who possessed a degree of calm pride and dignity, over which the French monarch himself had never been able to triumph. He was well aware, that notwithstanding the act of legitimation in favour of his daughter, the duchess of Orleans would look upon the proposed marriage as a degradation ; and that her opinion would be conclusive with the duke de Chartres, unless he was previously influenced in favour of the marriage by some other means.

Under these circumstances, Louis determined to employ Dubois, in order to gain over the young prince in the first instance ; and the conduct which he was to pursue having been insinuated to him, the abbé soon contrived to gain the full consent of the duke de Chartres in such a manner, as to prevent the possibility of his retreating from the engagement. He is said, indeed, to have employed every means to persuade the prince to his purpose ; sometimes alarming him by a representation of the evils which might follow a rejection of the king's proposal ; sometimes luring him, by the promises of high favour and distinction. The proposed bride also was beautiful, witty, and talented ; and

it was by no means from any personal disinclination that the duke hesitated in regard to the alliance. His pride revolted at the idea of marrying his uncle's natural daughter, and he was well aware that the indignation of his mother would know no bounds.

Having signified his consent, however, as soon as he had learned that his father approved of the match, he took upon himself to break the tidings to the duchess, whose first reply is said to have been a violent box on the ear. Her husband and her son, however, having both been gained, she could not of course resist ; and every thing having been arranged, the marriage took place in the beginning of the year 1692. The young duke, however, shortly after his union with mademoiselle de Blois, demanded permission to join the forces of the duke of Luxemburg, with whom he had already served one campaign, and the king's consent was accordingly granted. He was accompanied to the army by the abbé Dubois ; and while Louis in person conducted the siege of Namur, the young duke of Chartres and his preceptor remained with the forces which covered the siege. After the fall of Namur, Luxemburg was surprised by the prince of Orange, and the famous battle of Steinkerk took place, in which the French marshal drove back the allied troops with considerable loss. Several of the French princes were present upon the occasion, and amongst the rest the duke de Chartres, who displayed coolness and courage worthy of his race.

No one, however, distinguished himself more than Dubois, who, though his ecclesiastical profession prevented him from taking any active part in the military proceedings of the day, was found in every part of the field, in the thickest of the fire ; and afterwards drew up a relation of the events, which was presented to Louis, and received with great commendation by the king. After the battle was over, as the young duke de Chartres sat at supper with his preceptor, preparing to crown the actions of the day with one of those scenes of debauch,

with which he was already too familiar, the sound of groans from the field of battle is said to have reached his ear. The kind-hearted prince turned pale, as he instantly divined the nature of the noise he heard ; and Dubois suggested to him the humane idea of carrying the wounded in his carriages from the bloody field on which they had been left to the hospitals, where they might obtain more prompt assistance. This anecdote is told with some variations by other authors, who place it earlier in the day, but all attribute the suggestion to Dubois.

After having served, with considerable distinction, during one or two campaigns, the duke of Chartres returned to Paris, accompanied by his preceptor : and the duke of Luxemburg, in gratitude for the praises which Dubois had bestowed upon him in some accounts which he had written of the late military movements, did not fail to call the attention of the king to the gallantry which the abbé had himself displayed. For this purpose he seized the occasion of the sudden death of Pélisson, who expired in a moment, without the slightest previous symptom of illness. It was remarked to the monarch as a curious fact, that the abbé Pélisson, who had been originally a protestant, should thus have died without confession.

“ There is another abbé, whom your majesty knows,” observed Luxemburg immediately, “ who is very likely to die without confession also ; for he goes into the midst of the hottest fire like a grenadier. At the battle of Steinkerk I found him wherever I turned.”

This was not, however, the sort of distinction to which Dubois aspired ; and when the king, some time afterwards, on hearing him give a very vivid account of one of the battles which had lately taken place, demanded if he had been present on the occasion, the abbé replied, “ Oh no, sire, I was afraid of coming back with an absurdity the more, and an arm the less.”

In the mean while, Dubois had received from the king the abbey of Saint Just, the revenues of which were not

unimportant, and which was bestowed upon him, it was supposed, as a reward for the part he had taken in bringing about the marriage of the duke de Chartres and mademoiselle de Blois. Though the companion of the duke de Chartres in all his debaucheries, the confidant and promoter of most of his intrigues, Dubois did not fail to strive hard for the purpose of attracting the favourable notice of the king; and by the effect of pure impudence, the grand virtue of adventurers, appears to have been in some degree successful. When after the treaty of Ryswick, which took place in 1697, marshal Tallard was sent as ambassador to the court of London, some very difficult negotiations were commenced with regard to the succession to the crown of Spain, and Dubois either obtained permission, or was expressly sent, to visit the court at which these transactions were taking place.

The cause and circumstances of his journey to London on this occasion has never been very clearly explained. It has been frequently asserted, that he went only to gratify his own curiosity; but at the same time it is evident that he took some share in the diplomatic proceedings of the French embassy; and that he obtained introductions to, and entered into some degree of intimacy with, various statesmen, who were little likely to take any great notice of the abbé Dubois, unless he had been clothed with some more important character. Amongst the rest was the famous lord Stanhope; and here began an acquaintance which afterwards produced the most extraordinary consequences. Lemontey declares that this intimacy with Stanhope began in Spain; but it seems to me clear, on the contrary, that it commenced in London; and I cannot discover on what occasion it could have been formed in the Peninsula, as Dubois was pointedly excluded from the suite of the duke of Orleans, at the desire of the princess Orsini, when that prince proceeded to take the command of an army in Spain.

Whatever might be the ostensible purpose of Dubois' visit to London, it is certain, that, having laid aside the

ecclesiastical habit, and taken the title of the chevalier Dubois, he meddled so much with the diplomatic affairs intrusted to Tallard, that the ambassador sent him back to France in disgrace. It is said, though I believe on no very good authority, that he failed not to present himself immediately to the king, who restricted his reproof to a mere observation, almost as complimentary as reproachful. "See what it is to have too much wit," Louis is reported to have said: "with all the talents you possess, you cannot go about the world without getting yourself into a scrape." From his former pupil, however, Dubois met as kind a reception as ever; and the duke of Orleans having died some short time after, his son succeeded to the title, and revenues of his father.

On this occasion, the household of the young prince was regulated by his father-in-law, the king, who showed him, notwithstanding the irregularities of his married life, the greatest kindness and favour. Amongst other appointments, Dubois was named secretary to the duke; and in that situation continued to exercise all his peculiar talents in a manner which at the same time kept up those habits of intimacy and confidence with his former pupil which had arisen out of their early connection, and perhaps also displayed to the duke of Orleans, in the management of his private affairs, those keen abilities which he afterwards employed so successfully in the business of the state.

At length, when on the death of Louis XIV. the duke of Orleans was appointed regent by his will, and the feeble health of the young king held out a prospect to that dissolute prince of ascending the throne of France, Dubois, of course, did not fail to take advantage of the high favour in which he stood. His insolence, his impudence, his reprobate character, his notorious habits of falsehood, brought upon him many a just reproof, not only from the master whom he had corrupted, but from every class in the French capital. The first exclamation of the duchess-dowager of Orleans, when her son informed her that the re-

gency had fallen into his hands, shows to what a degree Dubois had by this time suffered his real character to appear.

"My son," she cried, "I have but one boon to ask of you, which is, never to employ that rogue, the abbé Dubois, the greatest scoundrel that exists in the world. He would sacrifice both you and the state for the slightest possible advantage."

The duke of Orleans did not reply; but his knowledge of the man, and of all his vices, made him hesitate even more than the counsels of his mother. It is true that popular opinion, and the judgment even of the good and virtuous, which the most vicious in general respect, was without any effect upon the duke of Orleans. But at the same time he felt that even he himself could scarcely calculate upon the fidelity of Dubois; and it would appear, that for several days he doubted whether he would confide in him at all. The abbé, however, was determined not to lose the opportunity, and boldly demanded, "Will you leave in inactivity the man who educated you, and whose talents you know?" Still the duke of Orleans hesitated, doubting much in what capacity he could employ his former preceptor.

At length he named him, as his first public employment, counsellor of state, adding a very significant injunction from a man so well acquainted with the character of him whom he addressed, "A little uprightness, if you please, abbé," he said; though perhaps he demanded more than he expected to obtain. That the duke of Orleans believed in the existence of few virtues, there can be no doubt; but even Dubois had not been able to corrupt the honour and frankness of his natural character, nor to deprive him of that respect for similar qualities in others, which was the natural consequence of possessing them himself. In granting to madame de Maintenon a continuance of the pension which she had received from the late king, the duke of Orleans expressly in-

served in the patent these words, after naming the sum, "Which her rare disinterestedness has rendered necessary to her!" Such a compliment was as honourable from the lips of the duke of Orleans, as the sarcasm which he addressed to Dubois was severe.

For a short time after his appointment, Dubois does not appear upon the scene in any very active employment; but ere long, the pretensions of Philip V. of Spain to the regency of France, and his ill-concealed design of casting aside his renunciation to the throne of that country, and claiming the crown, should the death of Louis XV. render it vacant, called forth the political talents of Dubois. The wars which had lately taken place, the changes in the succession which had occurred, both in Spain and England, and the consequences of the extraordinary and unnatural peace of Utrecht, had combined completely to disjoin the former political relations of all the great states of Europe. Philip V., king of Spain, claimed, by the right of birth, the regency of the French kingdom, and the contingent succession to the throne; while in Italy, also, large and important territories were demanded by him at the hands of the emperor. In England, a dynasty was established upon the throne, against whose rights were arrayed an important minority of the English nation, and a number of the most powerful princes in Europe. For his part, the emperor claimed the crown of Spain, and held a considerable portion of the former dominions of that crown in Italy; and, to use the words of a brilliant French writer, "It was, indeed, a curious epoch, when in Spain the government was Italian; in England, German; in Poland, Russian; in Germany, Spanish; in Italy, Austrian; in Portugal, English; and in Russia, every thing but Russian."

In the midst of these strange circumstances, and the difficult position in which it placed almost all the states of Europe, the duke of Orleans, menaced by his cousin, the king of Spain, was evidently hesitating where to turn for support, when the political discrimination of Dubois perceived that, notwithstanding the

dissensions even then taking place between France and England on account of the pretender, notwithstanding the ancient enmity of the two nations, notwithstanding the differences of various national interests, that there was a point of union between the regent and the king of England, which, if properly extended and strengthened, might secure to his master the safe possession of the regency which he held, and the ultimate succession to the throne of the kingdom, in case it should become vacant.

A mutual guarantee of the order of succession in the two countries, as already established, to the exclusion of the king of Spain on the one hand, and of the chevalier de St. George on the other, was absolutely necessary to the security of the regent of France and the king of England. The whole question, however, had become so embarrassed by various circumstances which existed in both countries, that no one seems to have seen their way clearly through its intricacies, except Dubois. Even in his case, although he comprehended perfectly the real interests of the two states, a thousand difficulties lay in the way.

On one hand, in England, the ministers of George I. had not only declaimed in the most violent terms against the provisions of the peace of Utrecht, but had shown a strong disposition to persecute the ministers by whom it was concluded, and to evade, misinterpret, or break the articles of a treaty which was to form the very basis, only enlarged and extended, of that alliance which Dubois desired to form. The ministers of the English king, then, seemed pledged to resist the efforts of Dubois; and no applications which had been made by the French ambassador in London had been able to draw any explicit reply from George I. regarding his intentions of adhering to, or of infringing, the treaty of Utrecht.

On the other hand, there can be very little doubt, that in France, the regent, without committing himself openly in the cause of the unfortunate prince called Pretender, had given him every sort of covert aid and

assistance in his late attempts upon the English crown ; and had thereby incurred not only the political, but in a degree the personal, enmity of George I., who contemned him as a man, and very much undervalued him as a prince and a statesman. At the moment when, as it would seem, Dubois first communicated his views to the regent, besides all personal considerations, every motive derived from the situation of France induced that prince to desire, as absolutely necessary to the safety and well-being of the country he governed, a peace with that state which had so long maintained a successful war against Louis XIV. But at the same time the emperor showed strongly his desire of once more plunging into hostilities. Spain was evidently preparing to contend with him in Italy and the Low Countries ; England was bound to Germany by the possession of Hanover, Bremen, and the districts she had wrested from Sweden by the means of Denmark ; and the duke of Orleans evidently saw that he was likely to be dragged into war, allied with no country but with Spain, whose resources appeared as nothing, and whose king was personally inimical to him. Nor was this all ; the revenues of the country were utterly exhausted ; and the regent, with all his errors in finance, was far from insensible to the exhausted state of France, as is clearly shown by the vast retrenchments which, according to the marquis de Dangeau, he made immediately upon the death of Louis XIV.

The negotiations carried on by the French ambassador, Iberville, at the court of London, having proved utterly unfruitful, and those of Chateauneuf at the Hague being but little more successful, the duke of Orleans consented that the abbé Dubois should in his private character attempt to open a negotiation with his former friend, lord Stanhope, who had now become the favourite minister of George I. The abbé and the regent were both in hopes that this correspondence might lead them forward to more formal negotiations ; and Dubois, in his first letter to lord Stanhope, dated the

12th of March, 1716, little more than six months after the commencement of the regency, plainly points to such a result. But the first great diplomatic transaction of Dubois will be best displayed by the brief correspondence which now took place between him and the British minister, and which exhibited not a little of that skill that he afterwards showed in all his negotiations. His first letter was to the following effect : —

“ My lord,

“ One cannot make a profession, as I have long done, of being your friend, without feeling a great interest in the success which the efforts of your ministry have obtained during the late movements in Scotland, and without congratulating you upon the event which has brought them to a conclusion so promptly. I am too well informed of the ties of esteem and confidence which have long existed between you and my lord, the duke of Orleans, not to be charmed with the quick return of the pretender, because on the one hand it is glorious for you, and on the other it must undeceive you regarding the rumours which have been spread of a secret influence at our court being used in favour of that enterprise, and must show you that they are without any foundation. I hope that nothing will alter the first inclinations which I found in you, and I trust that nothing will be neglected on the one part or the other which can contribute to the correspondence between our two masters. I pray you, my lord, to grant me still the honour of your good wishes, and to feel assured that in every occasion which presents itself you will find in me the friend you have so kindly treated, and all the esteem and gratitude that I owe you.”

On the 19th of March, lord Stanhope replied in the following terms : —

“ Sir,

“ I have had the honour of your letter of the 12th

of March, and am fully sensible of your kindness in remembering an old friend, in whom, I assure you, you will always find much frankness and a true esteem for you. I am very happy to learn from so good a source the favourable disposition of your court. Appearances really began to alarm us; but as we know for a certainty, that not only our intentions, but all our conduct, has given no foundation to the rumours which certain persons have made it their business to publish through the world, as if the king wished for war, and that he endeavoured to lead other powers to it also, we are very willing to believe, that these rumours have not been authorised or put forth with the design of colouring projects which may be forming against us. We are willing to believe also, relying on what you say, that all rumours of the secret influence of your court in favour of the enterprise of the pretender were nothing but a pure invention of the jacobites, in order to inspire their party. Whatever suspicions may have been entertained with regard to the past, nothing can be more easy for the future than to convince one another that we wish to live in peace, if that is really what is desired. As to this country, I will answer for it, and it is to be hoped, that a prince so enlightened as the regent, will not be the dupe of our unhappy fugitives, who will draw him certainly into a bad business if he gives ear to them. France, as well as England, would be to be pitied if such persons had the power of making us quarrel. But I will hope there will be nothing of the kind; and that on both parts, as you justly say, nothing will be neglected which can contribute not only to a co-operation, but to a strict friendship between our masters. I dare to assure you boldly, that your conduct in this respect shall be the rule of ours; for my part, I should desire, above every other thing, to contribute to such a co-operation. You know what it is that wounds us, and you have it in your power to put an end to all foundation for jealousy. When the regent shall have given it full attention, I am persuaded,

that, enlightened as he is, he will find it very bad policy, and very contrary to his personal interest, to keep us always in a state more disagreeable than that of an open war. You see that I keep my word with you, and speak frankly. I believe, that it is always best to know what we are to expect.

"Nevertheless, sir, whatsoever course our masters may follow, I beg you to believe, that I am very sincerely yours, &c."

About the same time, a proposal was made to the English ministry to enter into a defensive alliance with France and Holland, taking for the base of negotiation the treaty of Utrecht; but various circumstances rendered the government of Great Britain averse to the proposal: and, perhaps, the negotiations which were going on in Spain, and which we have noticed elsewhere with regard to the *assiento* and a commercial treaty, may have induced the administration to hesitate, or at least to procrastinate, for fear of throwing impediments in the way of an object they so much desired.

The French ambassador in Holland was directed to use his influence with the states of the United Provinces, in order to obtain their co-operation in the efforts made at London, to induce the British government, under George I., to recognise by some formal act the obligations of the treaty of Utrecht. He was at the same time commanded, it is evident, to endeavour to form a French party in Holland, in opposition to the English influence, which, for the time, was paramount. All that Chateaufort could obtain, however, was, that the Dutch ambassador in London should be directed to support the representations of France; but this was done without effect, and on the 10th* of April, 1716, Dubois again addressed lord Stanhope as follows: —

* Lemontey dates this letter the 8th — upon what authority I do not know, as I find it dated on the 10th.

“ My lord,

“ Your letter of the 19th of March enabled me to see clearly through the mists which a thousand confused reports, produced by divers interests, and perhaps by the zeal of some of the actors, had spread around. And I am rejoiced to know by a channel so sure as yours, the true intentions of your government. I believe I may reply to you, that those of ours are good and right. The character of our regent leaves no fear that he should pique himself upon perpetuating the prejudices and the course of our old court ; and as you yourself remark, he has too much sense not to perceive his real interest. I have not forgotten, that, in our conversations of old, you often said that there can be no solid connection between sovereigns, except inasmuch as each of them finds his interest therein in an equal degree. And you have wisely observed in your letter, that this principle would conduct our two masters, not only to a courteous co-operation, but to a strict friendship. I am too much obliged to you for having remembered the promise you formerly gave me, to speak frankly with me on all occasions, not to avow to you, with the same frankness, that I think exactly as you do ; and that this reciprocal interest should assure them of the solidity and durability of the connections which they may form together. So strongly am I convinced of this truth, that I am determined to use all my efforts for this union ; and I assure you, that if, in the measures which may be taken on one part or the other, you have reason to believe that collateral interests are raising some obstacle to the common good of our two masters, on the very first notice you give me, I will do all that depends upon me to aid you in discovering the truth ; in rendering straightforward that which has taken any wrong turn ; and to accomplish a connection which shall be no longer subject to any suspicion.

You may prove, whenever you wish, the truth of that which I have the honour to promise you. We never

sought each other for the purpose of deceiving each other ; and I know too well your sincerity not to have my heart upon my lips in my communications with you. You will easily understand, that I should be delighted that my master should take the steps most consistent with his interest ; that it should be with a nation for whom I have always entertained a partiality, and during the ministry of a friend so estimable and solid as you. Over and above this, my lord, besides the interests of our two masters, I declare that I should be delighted, that you should drink the best wine of France instead of the wine of Portugal ; and I, golden-pippin cider, instead of our coarse cider of Normandy. Let me add an interest, to which I am still more sensible, that of being able to cultivate, without interruption, the honour of your friendship ; and freely and assiduously to renew the assurances of esteem and attachment with which I am, &c."

To this letter, lord Stanhope made no answer ; and during some months, any diplomatic measures which were carried on took place through the medium of the ambassadors at London and the Hague. England proceeded to negotiate with the emperor for a defensive treaty, which was signed in London shortly after lord Stanhope received Dubois' letter ; and great efforts were made by the English court to induce the Dutch to enter into the confederation. That cautious people, however, feared to be drawn into a war, and endeavoured to hold a middle part, listening with great appearance of deference to the reasonings of England, yet holding out to the regent the prospect of a separate alliance between France and Holland.

The regent thought it necessary to inform the king of Spain of his proceedings in regard to England, and of his endeavours to obtain a formal recognition of the treaty of Utrecht ; but Alberoni, who was bending the whole efforts of his mind to gain over Great Britain to the interests of Spain, and Philip, who had pre-determined

that the treaty of Utrecht should not stand, returned a dry and uncivil answer; and shortly after, as if to bring affairs to a crisis, the British ministers drew up, and proposed to the French government, the sketch of a treaty between France, England, and Holland, to which the interests and the 'honour of the regent were equally opposed. The first step demanded was the expulsion of the pretender from Avignon, which was to be effected even before the treaty was signed; and a variety of other measures were to be taken for the security of the succession in England, while little or nothing was offered in favour of France. The regent, and marshal d'Uxelles, minister for foreign affairs, both looked upon this project as a mere evasion on the part of England, and the demonstration of her determination not to treat with France upon equal terms. Dubois, however, saw more deeply, and still contended, that all chance of effecting an alliance between the two countries was by no means lost.

While things were in this state, news arrived in Paris, purporting that George I., accompanied, or rather preceded, by his minister, lord Stanhope, was about to visit his German dominions, taking Holland in the way; and it was determined between the regent and Dubois, that the latter should instantly set out for the Hague in the most private manner, and endeavour to obtain an interview with lord Stanhope as he passed. To this project marshal d'Uxelles was most strongly opposed; but nevertheless Dubois carried his point and set out from Paris, giving out that the chief object of his journey into Holland was to recover the Seven Sacraments of Poussin, which had been bought by some Jews in Paris, and carried into Holland, and to purchase some other pictures and rare books at the general sales that were then taking place. His judgment in such matters would have rendered the tale not improbable, had he not been a counsellor of state; and even as it was, his functions in the ministry were far too unimportant to attract any great notice to his proceedings.

He was furnished with instructions, dated the 20th of June, 1716, by which the regent offered to guarantee the succession of the English crown in the protestant line, to oblige the chevalier de St. George to quit Avignon between the signature of the treaty and the exchange of the ratifications ; to refuse a refuge in France to English rebels ; to reduce the mouth of the canal of Mardyke, so as to prevent the entrance of vessels of war ; to treat upon the same footing with Holland ; and to guarantee the barrier treaty. The return for all this was simply to be the general guarantee of the treaties of Utrecht, and of the succession of the French and Spanish crowns according to the rule already laid down.

Dubois arrived at the Hague on the 5th of July, and proceeded immediately, and as secretly as possible, to an inn, holding some private conferences with the French ambassador, and notifying to lord Stanhope, who had not yet arrived at the Hague, that being accidentally in Holland purchasing some books and pictures, he should be delighted to see him if he passed by the Hague. Lord Stanhope replied that he should pass by the Hague, and while there, should take up his abode at the house of Walpole, the British ambassador, where he should be very happy to receive a visit from the abbé Dubois.

On the arrival of the minister, Dubois did not fail to present himself ; and their conversation is too remarkable to be passed over in silence, though we can only give the general heads of what took place. At first Dubois affected to have but one object in Holland, that of buying rare books and pictures ; and for some time the conversation turned upon that subject ; but the abbé at length took occasion, from a catalogue of books about to be sold, amongst which was announced the private correspondence of king William, to lead the conversation to his last letter to lord Stanhope, and to declare that in opening a communication with him he had been influenced by deeper motives than those of mere courtesy. In reply, lord Stanhope entered into the question at once ; and

informed Dubois that his master, the king of England, having too good reason to believe that the chevalier de St. George had been aided in his very last attempt by the regent, could of course attach but little value to that prince's professions of friendship. The emissary of the regent did not of course fail to justify his master, to assert boldly that all the rumours, which attributed such conduct to the duke of Orleans, were false, and that lord Stair, the British ambassador at Paris, had been duped and aided to dupe the king. Lord Stanhope replied, and simply stated, that although what Dubois asserted might be very true, yet the impression of the regent's covert enmity was so firmly fixed in the mind of the king of England, and in the minds of the other members of the British cabinet, that he feared it would be impossible to eradicate it.

He ended by saying, that there was nothing but time and experience of a contrary feeling which would dissipate the suspicions of the monarch. Dubois instantly caught at the words "experience of the contrary," exclaiming, "What prevents them from having recourse to it? Is it the man who is pressing the conclusion of a treaty of alliance that they can accuse of disingenuousness and perfidious designs?"

He then entered into the question of expelling the unfortunate chevalier de St. George before the signature of the treaty, and showed that the very demand was ungenerous; while the regent, if he acceded, would have the whole of France clamorous against him, unless he could at the same time present to the nation a treaty holding out reasonable advantages as an inducement.

The reply of lord Stanhope was memorable. "You combat," he said, "the opinions of my adversaries, not mine. I declare that I regard the expulsion of the chevalier de St. George with perfect indifference. I would just as soon have him at Avignon as at Rome or Bologna; and if ever France should risk an enterprise against England, I should only desire, to cause its failure, that the pretender was at the head thereof." He proceeded to say,

that it was the firm resolution of the king of England to engage in no treaty where the arrangements of Utrecht were renewed ; adding, that the house of Austria had always looked unfavourably upon that treaty, and that the king felt that he ought not to wound old friends for the purpose of conciliating new and uncertain allies. This language was so determined that Dubois rose, saying, if such were the case, he would only advise the duke of Orleans to wait for time to show the king of England the dangers of his actual situation, and the great advantages which he might derive from a strict union with France.

While Stanhope was replying, he was interrupted by a visiter ; and Dubois, fearing that the whole transaction was at an end, took leave ; but before he quitted him, lord Stanhope told him that he would come to wish him good-by at nine o'clock that night. In a conference which followed between the French emissary and the ambassador from his own court, it was still judged, from various circumstances connected with the conversation of the morning, that lord Stanhope was not so much averse to treat as he had appeared ; but that probably he expected some more definite offers on the part of Dubois.

At the hour when the British minister was expected to visit the abbé in his inn, every thing was prepared by Dubois for his reception with the greatest possible art. Old books and pictures covered the table ; and if lord Stanhope had been a man to be deceived on such a subject, he might have been led to believe that the real objects which had brought Dubois to the Hague were matters of taste, and not of diplomacy. Their first conversation, however, was once more about books, but it soon turned to politics ; and in the end, after a long discussion, in which wit and talent of various kinds were mingled in an extraordinary degree with diplomatic skill and art, the British minister confided to Dubois what was the only basis on which a treaty could be framed between the regent and the king of England.

Another interview succeeded on the following day; and from those two conferences may be said to have arisen, first, that famous treaty known as the Triple Alliance, and afterwards the no less famous Quadruple Alliance. Having ascertained completely what were Stanhope's views, what the regent might hope to obtain, and what he would be obliged to grant, Dubois hurried back to Paris, and showed plainly to the duke of Orleans, that if he still judged peace to be absolutely necessary to France; if he still felt that Spain was not to be relied upon, as an ally of any French government which had the house of Orleans at its head; if he looked upon the alliance of England, and its guarantee of the established succession to the crown of France as strictly requisite to his own security, he might obtain such an alliance and such a guarantee, together with the probable co-operation of Holland, and the certainty of prolonged peace with the empire; but it must be by sacrifices not only of advantages but of honour.

On the other hand, however, the duke of Orleans had to consider what was to be the result if he did not make those sacrifices:—the probability, if not the certainty, of an immediate war with England and the empire; Holland affecting to stand neuter, but supporting Great Britain; in France an exhausted treasury; a people already beginning to grow dissatisfied with his government, and resources labouring under the effects of a reign of long wars and extravagances; in Spain an ally feeble in itself, and more than doubtful in its affections, which could give little aid at any time, and would take the first opportunity of snatching the rod of authority from his hands. With such prospects the duke of Orleans chose the sacrifices; and though what he obtained was neither very honourable nor very advantageous to France, it is hard to say that he was wrong in taking what was, perhaps, the least evil course in a situation of extreme difficulty.

He was supported in his views by the recommend-

ations of Dubois, who looked upon the sacrifices of honour as nothing, and who well knew that, however much the French might grumble, they would not serve with less zeal and alacrity; declaring that Mazarin was a wise man when he said, that the best fund of a king of France is the folly of Frenchmen. This indefatigable minister having arrived in Paris on the 30th of July, and held several long consultations with his master on the subject of the negotiation, was ready to set out again for Hanover on the 10th of August; and proceeded to the post-house at Osnabruck, where he received an invitation from lord Stanhope to proceed to Hanover, and there took up his abode in the house of the British minister. Various difficulties still remained to be overcome; and several conventions were entered into, both in London and at Hanover,—one of the most important of which was that drawn up by Stanhope and Dubois, and signed on the 9th of October.

In that convention all the articles of the proposed treaty were specified distinctly; and it was agreed that the states of Holland should be invited to take part therein; but that in case of refusal on their side, the conditions were still to be binding upon France and England; and that the definitive treaty was to be signed at the Hague as soon as the plenipotentiaries could meet there for that purpose. A number of difficulties still attended the transaction: the Dutch had their demands to make; and although the treaty was in reality not disadvantageous to the interests of the emperor, they made use of his name in order to enhance their claims. Fears of offending Spain, also, and of losing the benefits held out to them by Alberoni, rendered them most unwilling to enter into any treaty with other nations, without evident and immediate advantages. The English ambassadors, too, appeared at the Hague without being furnished with full powers to sign the treaty independent of Holland; and even the regent himself and marshall d'Uxelles threw various impediments in the

way of Dubois, which his nature, as impetuous as it was subtle, could scarcely brook.

He wrote, under these circumstances, a vehement letter to the regent, informing him that the greatest danger existed of the treaty not being signed at all, or under still more disadvantageous circumstances, if any farther delays took place. He assured him that lord Stanhope had declared that if the British parliament met before the final signature of the treaty, he could not answer for its being accomplished at all ; and he begged that the regent would either revoke his orders or recall himself. With as much art, however, as impetuosity, he enclosed the letter to the regent in one to the marquis de Nocé, master of the wardrobe, insinuating to him the manner in which he was to present it to the duke, and how to give it the turn he desired. A number of other obstacles afterwards occurred. The king of England himself began to hesitate, and besought Dubois, by means of lord Stanhope, not to press for the signature on the part of England for some days, in order that means might be taken to induce the states of Holland to sign at the same time. But at length all these difficulties were removed ; and on the 4th of January, 1717, the treaty was signed with all the necessary formalities, and Dubois announced the fact to the regent in the following few words : — “ J’ai signé à minuit ; vous voilà hors de pages, et moi hors de peur.”

Such was the conduct of Dubois in the negotiation of the famous triple alliance ; and the immense and almost inconceivable exertions that he made can only be known by examining his correspondence, which shows, during the period in which the affair was in agitation, a mass of despatches to the regent, the council, and the minister for foreign affairs, such as, perhaps, no minister ever before produced. In it is displayed all the subtle talents of the French negotiator ; the art with which he met the arts of all the many with whom he had to contend ; the determined eagerness with which he pressed every particular point ; never for a moment losing sight of the

real matter of argument ; and the immense variety and fecundity of mind which enabled him to present the same thing in a thousand different aspects, to repeat it constantly in new shapes, and to ornament or illustrate it with new figures.

The regent, as he well might be, was satisfied with the efforts, diligence, and skill of Dubois. France was not so easily satisfied, however ; and posterity has judged the triple alliance still less favourably. Nobody can deny that the French diplomatist displayed, in conducting the negotiations, talents of the very highest order ; but it may be greatly questioned whether the objects he proposed himself to attain were worthy of the sacrifices he made to obtain them. There can be no doubt, also, that in pursuit of his purpose, he suffered too much impetuosity and eagerness to appear, and thus suffered the colder and more phlegmatic ministers with whom he had to deal to gain advantages which nearly counterbalanced all his diplomatic art. In obtaining the signature of England and Holland to the treaty, in delivering France from the danger of an immediate and unequal war, Dubois certainly displayed the greatest skill ; but by the result of his efforts it may be doubted whether France obtained any real advantage, and it cannot be doubted whether she lost considerably in point of honour. If this view of the case be correct, the fault of Dubois was of a higher order than his merit.

I cannot better show what was the opinion of the most reflecting part of the French nation then, than by quoting the words of the brilliant Lemontey in regard to this very treaty of alliance.

“ The order of succession to the crowns of France and England was guaranteed by this treaty conformably to the peace of Utrecht, and this was the only advantage common to the two contracting parties. An outrageous partiality dictated all the articles against France. It was required of us to proscribe the enemies of king George ; proclamation was made in Paris for the expul-

sion of the jacobites ; and the chevalier Dillon went to enjoin the pretender, even within the walls of Avignon, to pass the Alps, which he did without resistance. Louis XIV., forced with one hand to demolish the port of Dunkirk, had re-established it with the other by the construction of the canal of Mardyke. This great work was destroyed ; and people consoled themselves by calculating that it would have cost a war and thirty-five millions to complete it. England exacted that the Dutch should enter into the treaty ; and France paid for their repugnance by two sacrifices, one of vanity and the other of money. She freed the importation of their merchandize from the impost of four sous per lb., and granted them the title of High Mightinesses, which the pride of our diplomacy had previously refused. The abbé Dubois believed, at least, that the period of such concessions would be favourable to soften the harshness of the English protocol, but his efforts had no success. Not only did the king of England continue to invest himself with the title of King of France, but the abbé Dubois having taken a fancy to make the king of France take the same title himself, an order from the cabinet of London denied the French monarch the use of his own name, and enjoined him to call himself simply the Most Christian King, a denomination devoid of sense when it is voluntary, disgraceful when it is forced."

Such concessions, so great and so extraordinary, produced a very general opinion, which has not yet been removed, that the abbé Dubois received a considerable bribe from England, and that he remained throughout his life the pensioner of Great Britain. Certainly the whole of his correspondence displays a degree of eagerness to conclude the alliance which might be suspicious in itself, if the sort of impetuosity which he showed upon this occasion had not been an established part of his character, displaying itself to the very hour of his death. The great favour and flattering marks of regard which were shown him by lord Stanhope of course added strength to the rumour ; and his having lived in the

British minister's house at Hanover was also held to be a suspicious circumstance. But we must remember, that for several years Dubois had been on terms of friendship with lord Stanhope, and that the whole course of the negotiations, as displayed in the abbé's own correspondence, was likely to increase at the same time the English statesman's respect for the talents and skill of the French diplomatist, and his personal regard for the man.

It may be some authority, too, for doubting the fact of this bribe having been given, that monsieur de Rayneval, who had the best opportunity of knowing, from possessing all the private correspondence of Dubois, does not seem to have believed that such had been the case. But the base submissions of the French minister to the English court, and the low and degrading terms in which he himself expresses his obedience to all the wishes of the British government, are but too suspicious circumstances against him.* However that may be, Dubois remained some time longer in Holland, and proceeded to Utrecht, in order to meet and confer with George I. himself on his arrival from Hanover, which took place on the 22d of January. The king treated the abbé Dubois with the highest distinction, and granted him several audiences; and the unhappy chevalier de St. George having quitted Avignon, the ratifications of the treaty took place on all parts.

As the designs of Spain became more apparent, the gratitude of the regent towards his former preceptor became unbounded; and although he did not at once raise him to the office of secretary of state, which, probably, Dubois expected, he continued to consult him on all affairs of foreign policy, and by his advice directed his own efforts in opposition to those of Alberoni. In the mean while, the place of secretary to the king's cabinet became vacant by the death of Callieres; and shortly after his return from the Hague, Dubois was appointed to that office, though not without many a sneer on the part of marshall d'Uxelles, who hated the rival diplomatist with

* See letters of Dubois, 1st Oct. 1718, 14th Oct. 1718, 19th Dec. 1719.

all the bitterness of an inferior mind, and many a libel on the part of the Parisian populace.

All, however, produced no effect in diminishing the regard of the duke for his former preceptor ; and shortly after, perceiving that unless vigorous measures were taken to maintain the tranquillity of Europe, the quarrels of Spain and the empire would soon involve the whole continent in a general war, he despatched Dubois as ambassador to London, in order to secure, if possible, the fruits of that negotiation for which France had paid so dear. But the French minister now no longer proceeded in secret to conduct negotiations, every step of which was involved in darkness and mystery. He was furnished with a sumptuous service of gold plate, formerly belonging to Louis XIV. ; he was accompanied by the poet Destouches as his secretary ; and every thing that could give splendour and dignity to the licentious and unprincipled representative of a licentious and unprincipled prince was added to the embassy of Dubois. The only thing, however, which gave any real respectability to his mission was the professed object thereof, namely, to secure the peace of Europe, still threatened by the feuds of Spain and the empire.

If ever the strictest impartiality was necessary in deciding between the claims of rival powers, it was required in mediating between the emperor and the Spanish king, but unfortunately no such impartiality was to be found. All the prejudices of George I. were in favour of the empire ; the feelings of Stanhope himself had a bias that way ; and the cabinet of St. James's ruled the decisions both of France and Holland. All that either of those powers pretended to do was to retard a little the fierce and decided march of British diplomacy. Lord Stanhope was, it is true, strongly desirous of bringing about a lasting peace ; but he was evidently desirous also of rendering that peace advantageous to the emperor.

It is clear from the letters of Dubois, that in his first conferences with the British minister at Westminster, in the end of 1717, he believed that the cabinet of St. James's was acting in the whole business with the sort of selfish policy which foreigners are apt sometimes justly, but more frequently without cause, to attribute to English diplomacy ; and, apparently as a sort of touchstone, in one of his conversations with lord Stanhope, he proposed a sacrifice to be made by England itself, in order to facilitate their pacific measures. After speaking generally of the difficulties of the negotiation, and *the little stuff*, as he called it, wherewith to satisfy the parties interested, he said that if England indeed were willing to give up Gibraltar to Spain, something, perhaps, might be done. Lord Stanhope replied, that if he were convinced such a sacrifice would bring about the great end desired, though it might cost him his head, he would attempt to accomplish it.

There is every reason to believe, however, that the British minister soon became convinced that it could not be done ; and that Dubois was informed of the fact, and perfectly sure that whatever might be said upon the subject, England would never be brought to cede Gibraltar. He did not, however, fail to make use of the idea, holding out the prospect thereof to Alberoni, knowing very well, that if the cardinal would not listen to the proposal, it would draw the hatred of the Spanish people upon him ; and if he did listen to it, and England demurred, the indignation of the Spanish people would fall upon England, not France.* The conferences between Dubois and the British ministry still continued ; and the difficulties raised by Spain only hastened the proceedings of the allies. The measures which were now taken both to impede the alliance or to render it of no effect are detailed in the life of Alberoni ; but the difficulties which Dubois encountered from the weakness of his master belong more particularly to this place.

* See some observations from Lemontey at the end of this memoir.

More than once, during the course of the negotiations, the vacillations of the regent threw back his plenipotentiary several steps from the point at which he had arrived; and, more than once, also, yielding to the lures held out by Alberoni, he seemed willing to abandon the side he had espoused, and support the cause of Spain. The good feeling, too, of the duke of Orleans, and his natural sense of justice, made him feel painfully the partiality of his British ally towards the emperor; and it was with the greatest difficulty, that the united remonstrances of Dubois and the English ministry could induce him to direct the French ambassador at Madrid to use the same threatening and violent language which was employed by the envoys of England. On such occasions Dubois hastened over from London to Paris to inspire the regent with vigour, determination, and the spirit of the English councils; and at length, by his efforts, and those of lord Stanhope, a convention was drawn up as the base of that treaty, known as the quadruple alliance. This convention imported that the emperor should renounce all his pretensions to Spain and the Indies, should give up Sardinia to the duke of Savoy, and receive in exchange the island of Sicily. The states of Parma and Tuscany, after the death of the incumbent sovereigns, were guaranteed to the children of the queen of Spain; and Swiss garrisons were to be placed in the fortresses of those duchies. Holland was to be invited to join the allies in this act as well as in the former one; and if Spain refused to accede within three months, she was to be compelled to do so by force of arms.

As soon as these articles were determined upon, lord Stanhope went over to Paris for the purpose of obtaining the formal signature on the part of France, while Dubois remained in London to sign the definitive treaty. As a renunciation by the emperor to the throne and dominions of Spain formed the fundamental point of this treaty, and as the terms of that renunciation might make the very greatest difference in the treaty itself, and in the

point of view by which it would be received by all Europe, Dubois proposed to lord Stanhope, before that nobleman quitted London, to have the form of the renunciation drawn up and sent to the emperor for his approval. Lord Stanhope, however, and the secretary Craggs persuaded Dubois not to suspend the signature of the treaty for such a preliminary, and undertook verbally that the king of England should obtain from the emperor a complete and full renunciation in the terms of the treaty of Utrecht. The French plenipotentiary yielded to their reasonings; lord Stanhope signed the convention in Paris; and Dubois the definitive treaty in London.

The abbé Dubois, however, had only been induced to commit so egregious an error, on the positive assurance given him by the British government, that the fleet which had sailed for the Mediterranean under Byng would commit no act of hostility whatsoever against Spain until the formal renunciation of the emperor, in the terms agreed upon, had been received from Vienna. But, notwithstanding this engagement, the English fleet, as we have shown elsewhere, attacked and totally annihilated that of Spain; and by that very act put the parties to the quadruple alliance, and especially the emperor, before the renunciation had been made, in a totally different position towards each other from that which they had occupied before.*

* As a completely different view has been taken of this affair by many modern historians, it may be necessary to justify my statement by a reference to the letters of Dubois upon this occasion, dated 14th October and 29th October, 1718. "Vous savez, monsieur, que lorsque je voulus exécuter cet ordre, et ne pas signer le traité qu'on ne fût convenu de la forme de la renonciation, vous crûtes si important de ne pas différer la signature du traité, que vous me conjurâtes de ne point faire cette difficulté, quoique raisonnable, juste et indispensable de ma part. Malgré le danger où je m'exposais, je cédai à vos remontrances et à vos instances, et a celles de milord Sunderland, et aux assurances que vous me donnâtes, l'un et l'autre, que la renonciation, de l'empereur serait conforme à celle du roi catholique et de son altesse royale, exprimées dans les traites d'Utrecht, et que le roi de la Grande Bretagne en ferait son affaire."

"Le motif q'on m'a insinué pour m'y engager, a été que le roi de la Grande Bretagne n'enverrait point d'ordre à sa flotte pour agir, avant la signature du traité. L'empereur, alors, pouvait craindre pour ses états, et il n'aurait pas eu sur l'Espagne l'avantage que lui a donné le combat naval."

In the mean time some difficulties had occurred in France regarding the signature of the convention, which, though created by enmity to Dubois, served only to hasten his elevation. Lord Stanhope, in going over to France, was actuated by the strong motive of insuring to the treaty of alliance, which had been accomplished with such difficulty, all the guarantees that could be obtained. The representations of lord Stair, the British ambassador in Paris, had led the English ministers to believe, that the power of the regent himself was doubtful and precarious, and his policy insecure; and the British nobleman, in consequence, demanded that the convention should be signed by the *maréchal d'Uxelles*, president of the council of state for foreign affairs.

D'Uxelles' jealousy of Dubois, however, now broke forth, and he positively refused to sign a treaty drawn up by his rival. Though angry and mortified, the regent was obliged to have recourse more to gentle measures than to threats. After a few days of pitiful resistance, D'Uxelles was gained, and signed the treaty; but his conduct upon the occasion was not forgotten either by the prince or Dubois. No sooner were these arrangements made, than the abbé returned to Paris, while lord Stanhope proceeded to Madrid, in order, if possible, to induce Alberoni to submit to the conditions which England, France, and the empire had determined to impose upon him. Scarcely had he quitted that country, after finding his efforts vain, when the news reached him of the destruction of the Spanish fleet by that of England. That event placed him in a very difficult position; it rendered war between England and Spain inevitable; it put the property of a great number of individuals in imminent danger; it threatened to deprive Great Britain of all the commercial advantages which might be derived from Spain; and it left her with the chance of entering on a disadvantageous war, without support or compensation.

Lord Stanhope was well aware that the great bulk of the British nation looked with jealousy upon the alliance

he had entered into with France. ' He was well aware that the great commercial bodies of the country would be strongly opposed to him in an absolute breach with Spain ; and he saw that the only thing which could deliver him from the unpleasant situation in which this hasty act of admiral Byng had placed him, would be to hurry on France into the same active measures against Spain that England would now be compelled to adopt ; for had France chosen to temporise, or to deal favourably with Spain, the British ministry would only have the alternative of abandoning a course of proceedings which they were bound in honour to maintain, or of commencing the war at once, while France remained at peace, and thus became the arbiter of the destiny of Europe.

Under these circumstances, it became an absolute necessity with lord Stanhope to use his utmost endeavours for the purpose of placing at the head of the French diplomacy a man who was committed beyond recall to exactly the same course of action which he himself was bound to follow. It was natural, therefore, fully as much with a view to his own interests, as on account of his friendship with Dubois, that he should strongly urge the duke of Orleans to give the administration of foreign affairs in France into the hands of him who had perfected the triple and quadruple alliances. That he made such applications there can be no doubt ; and the way was already prepared for the fulfilment of his wishes, by the partial changes which had taken place in the system of the regency, by the indignation of the regent at marshal d'Uxelles, and by his attachment to Dubois. D'Argenson had succeeded D'Aguesseau ; Noailles had given in his resignation ; and almost immediately after lord Stanhope's return from Spain, D'Uxelles also was dismissed, the council for foreign affairs put an end to, and Dubois created secretary of state for that department.

He had arrived at this point of his ambitious course, however, at a moment of very great difficulty ; and the

first tidings connected with his own peculiar province that he received was, that the emperor, seizing the advantageous position which the destruction of the Spanish fleet had opened before him, instead of a renunciation in the terms agreed upon, had made one totally different ; mangling the fine latinity in which Dubois had couched the instrument, and inserting or omitting various articles in a manner which would have set all France in an uproar ; left the successions to the crowns in nearly as much doubt as ever, and afforded him an opportunity of evading his engagements whenever he pleased.

Dubois was in absolute despair ; for he not only found that he had placed himself in a most dangerous position, but perceived, with the deepest mortification which a subtle man can experience, that he had been absolutely outwitted. He instantly wrote the most vehement letters of remonstrance to lord Stanhope, to the secretary Craggs, and to the imperial ambassador ; conjuring them to effect the necessary change in the renunciation, and showing that he could not retain his place in France for four days, if the act, as it then existed, should be published in Paris. He even, in the first moments of apprehension and disappointment, threatened to destroy himself ; but Great Britain speedily interfered : and the emperor had too much need of her assistance, as well as too eager a desire to possess Sicily, not to yield to her menaces, and alter the renunciation to her pleasure.

While he had pursued with success these measures connected with his immediate department, Dubois had followed with as favourable a result, though in a more secret manner, various political operations which we must retread our steps for a short time to trace. During the whole of his sojourn in England, he had continued to direct the movements of the duke of Orleans, and his own friends in the French ministry, in regard to many points quite unconnected with foreign policy. To the regent, whose facility and irresolution were known to none so well as to Dubois, he laboured hard to give character and firmness ; and to his form of

government he endeavoured to give that shape and modification which would render it the most easily managed by a single hand.

His confidant, Chavigni, had passed over with instructions from Dubois, in order to direct the proceedings of all those on whom he could rely ; and whether he did or did not contemplate, as an ultimate result, the attainment of supreme power, as prime minister himself, or solely laboured to render the machine of state more manageable for his master, there can be no doubt that he had long exhorted the duke of Orleans to dismiss the various councils composed of the high nobility of France ; under whose superintendence had been placed all those different departments of administration, which are usually conducted by a secretary of state. The arguments which he used upon this occasion, however impudent and subtle, were at all events destitute of hypocrisy. He spoke to the duke of Orleans of his own interests alone, and supposed in him no other purpose but that of perpetuating his own power. He thus showed him, that by surrounding the young king with such a number of nobles, he raised up a body of men, who would probably find it their interests, when the king attained his majority, to overthrow the power of the house of Orleans ; while, if he intrusted the same functions to simple secretaries of state, he would only have to deal with men likely to remain the creatures of his will, and who would have little, if any, chance of rivalling or supplanting him in the favour of the king.

Either from his natural irresolution, or some other impediments, the duke of Orleans, notwithstanding the strong remonstrances on this subject, which Dubois addressed to him in the very beginning of 1718, failed to put his counsels in execution till his return from London, which did not take place till the 20th of August in that year. The retirement of D'Aguesseau, and the elevation of Argenson had infused a portion of vigour into the measures of the ministry of the duke of Orleans, and the dismissal of all the councils was soon

determined upon ; before that, however, an act of firmness, even to severity, signalised the return of Dubois. During the time of his absence, the parliament of Paris, which the duke of Orleans had himself called forth from the profound depression into which the overpowering reign of Louis XIV. had thrown it, and which, as a natural consequence, had shown itself in almost all instances opposed to his wishes, had proceeded step by step towards that point of resistance, when the defeat of one party or the other was absolutely necessary to the progress of affairs, but when the attempt to produce a crisis was only to be made at the hazard of a civil war.

The tampering of the duke of Orleans and Law with the currency was the signal for the most determined opposition on the part of the parliament. A decree for debasing the coin having been issued, though coloured with various pretences, and enveloped in ambiguous words, it was attacked with the utmost violence by the parliament, all disguises torn off, and the iniquity and fraud of the whole transaction clearly exposed. The parliament then attempted that union with several of the superior courts which had been so successful in the days of the Fronde ; but the minds of men were not prepared for the same scenes ; the spirit of the times was no longer the same ; the grand council, the court of aids, and the chamber of accounts, refused to unite with the parliament ; which, thus left to proceed alone, failed not to remonstrate, and in the end to forbid the execution of the edict. Its decree on this subject was instantly annulled by the regent, and a new system of attack was formed by the parliament, in the midst of which the most violent counsels were adopted ; and it would appear that a proposal was certainly made to arrest the famous financier Law, to try him with closed doors, and hang him without a moment's respite.

The regent, however, whose personal courage was beyond all doubt, took measures for carrying the royal edicts into execution by force ; but in the mean time

other matters had occurred to complicate the question with the parliament, and add new embarrassments to his situation. The peers of France had quarrelled with the parliament upon a number of the most ridiculous points of etiquette ; and the duke of St. Simon himself, the man who, perhaps, had the greatest sensibility of any one on earth for the ridiculous in others, was not only insensible to the absurdity of any vehemence upon such a point, but was one of the most fiery and insane sticklers for all the petty rights of his class. The regent, to whom the question of etiquette was referred, with his usual irresolution, decided first for and then against the peers ; and while tormented by the dukes on the one hand, and the parliament on the other, the whole difficulties of his situation were rendered tenfold greater than ever by the virulent determination expressed by the duke of Bourbon, and other princes of the blood-royal, to deprive the natural children of Louis XIV. who had been legitimized by that monarch in the most solemn manner, of all the privileges which they had now enjoyed for many years.

The duke of Bourbon, a brutal, licentious, and violent, but persevering and determined man, was dreaded by the regent simply on account of that very obstinate and resolute character which he himself did not possess. As the first prince of the blood-royal, the duke of Orleans had most cause to object to the honours shown to the natural children of his uncle ; but he nobly replied, when first called upon to degrade them from their rank, that he had not attacked their privileges while the late king lived, and would not do so now that he was dead. The duke of Bourbon, however, persisted, and, as usual, overcame the resolution of the regent. The first step was taken against them in 1717, when the council of regency declared them incapable of succeeding to the throne ; and took from them the rank of princes of the blood, but at the same time left them several minor privileges which gave them precedence of the other peers. The invet-

erate hatred of the duke of Bourbon was not contented with this ; his animosity towards his own aunt, the duchess of Maine, required that her husband should be degraded to the simple rank of his peerage according to its date, and he easily brought over all the other peers to his views, jealous as they already were of the pre-eminence which had been left to the legitimated princes.

These cabals, however, had not escaped the attention of the duchess of Maine and her party ; and an opposite intrigue had been carried on by herself, the other princes in the same situation as her husband, and the principal nobles of France, not peers. Assemblies were held ; remonstrances made ; declarations drawn up ; the parliament, though it gave no very ostensible encouragement to these proceedings, yet gave them the support of its tacit acquiescence ; and the nobility of France was gradually assuming the functions of a great deliberative body, in which course its members were scarcely stopped by the authority and power of the regent. Thus, before Dubois' return from London, the duke of Orleans, urged on by the duke of Bourbon and the peers, was in a state of suspended hostility with the legitimated princes and inferior nobles ; and urged on by Law, D'Argenson, and others, was equally at enmity with the parliament. Nor was this all ; the early discussions with the parliament of Paris had communicated to the provincial parliaments the same spirit of resistance ; and the assemblies of the nobles of the capital had spread a general tone of disaffection through the great mass of inferior nobles which swarmed in the country.

What would have been the consequence of this state of things had the duke of Orleans been left to his own irresolution can hardly be told ; but just at the moment when the hostile intentions of the two parties were in suspense, Dubois returned to Paris, and supporting the vigorous resolutions of Argenson, induced the regent to strike the first blow, ere the parliament and the nobles were sufficiently encouraged and strengthened

by impunity to commence the attack upon himself. A council was first held, in which it was determined, with scarcely a murmuring voice, to reduce the duke of Maine to the ordinary rank of his peerage ; and at the same time, though his brother was comprehended in the same act, it was resolved to frame an excuse, sufficiently showing the partiality and injustice of the decision, in order to leave to the count of Toulouse the honours which he enjoyed for his life.

It is sufficiently evident that Dubois and Argenson were the sole contrivers of the design ; but Dubois kept himself through the whole business as much as possible from the public eye ; and in the record of the proceedings, preserved by Dangeau, we find that he was only summoned to the bed of justice, the preparations for which he had himself made, with three other counsellors of state. At the same time that these measures were resolved upon against the duke of Maine, it was determined completely to humble the parliament ; and on the 26th of August, 1718, that body was summoned to appear before the king in his bed of justice. The members of the parliament presented themselves with fear and trembling ; and as soon as they were seated, D'Argenson addressed them, and read the edict of the king, by which all their last decrees were annulled, their power circumscribed, and their influence in the state destroyed. The first president demanded permission for the parliament to examine the edict before it was registered, upon which the keeper of the seals replied, " The king will be obeyed, and obeyed upon the spot."

I shall conclude the account of what passed in the words of Dangeau :—" After that, the keeper of the seals read an edict, which took from M. du Maine the rank which they had left him last year, when they took from the legitimated princes the name of princes of the blood, and the power of succeeding to the crown ; and they now reduced them to the simple rank which is given to them by the date of their peerage. Afterwards, by a new act, they gave to M. le comte de Tou-

louse, for his person only, the honours which he enjoyed before the last change; and it was declared that this was on account of his great merit and his great services. When this was finished, M. le duc (de Bourbon) rose, and presented a petition to demand the superintendence of the education of the king, which was due to him by right of his birth. The duke of Orleans added thereto, that M. du Maine being no longer any more than a peer in the rank of his peerage, and consequently after the *maréchal de Villeroy*, he could not hold an authority over that marshal. The petition of the duke was granted, and all was registered before the bed of justice finished."

Thus was destroyed in an hour all the pretensions of a weak and pusillanimous body, whose sole power had been derived from the irresolution of a man, who, to use the words of his historian, "never feared the greatest danger, but was terrified at the least difficulty." So great, however, had been the conviction, that the parliament did possess some real power, or, in other words, that the people were inclined to support it, that Dubois and Argenson had taken every measure of precaution which their extraordinary vigilance and activity of mind could suggest, in order to repress any popular movement on its first appearance. Those precautions, however, were perfectly unnecessary. The people saw the parliament go to the bed of justice like sheep to the shearing, and saw them come back shorn without any more notice than they would have taken of any other innocent and uninteresting flock; and Dubois finding that nothing was to be feared, caused three of the most furious demagogues of the parliament to be arrested, and sent off to distant prisons, whence they came back, after a time, made wise by the past, and became, to use the sarcastic words of St. Simon, "amongst the tamest of the regent's tame pigeons."

The success of the vigorous measures of Dubois, of course, added to his credit with the regent; but the end of this year was to be signalled by another event

which relieved him from some of the greatest difficulties in which he had been placed, and which, by the very means which were intended to overthrow the power of the duke of Orleans, confirmed that power in the strongest manner, by the skilful use that Dubois made of the frustrated arts of his enemies. War between England and Spain, as we have before said, had now become inevitable; and Dubois was committed, in a manner which suffered no retreat, to hurry on France also to immediate hostilities against the country with which she was connected by so many powerful ties. The British ministry pressed him earnestly to take that irrevocable step, urged, remonstrated, and entreated. But there were a thousand difficulties and obstacles opposed to such a course. The great body of the people were undoubtedly friendly to Spain; a very large portion were desirous of the rule of Philip V.; a still larger strongly opposed to the government of the duke of Orleans; and, at that moment, not ten men out of a thousand, probably throughout the whole of France, would have heard the very name of war with Spain without indignation and murmurs.

To the representations, therefore, of the court of England, Dubois gave nothing but evasive answers. Soon, however, his letters showed a more decided tone; he promised speedily to comply with the wishes of the British government; he declared that there were private motives which induced him to delay and temporise for a time; and it must have been evident to any one who knew the subtle and dexterous, but impetuous, nature of the man, that he had got in his hands the thread of some intrigue, which he was spinning carefully to a conclusion, but which he was afraid that the slightest movement of his own eager spirit might snap in twain ere it was complete. At length the news reached the cabinet of Great Britain, that the prince de Cellamare, the Spanish ambassador, had been arrested in Paris on the 9th of December, accused of carrying on intrigues contrary to the rights of nations; and that an immense

number of imprisonments were taking place, amongst which was that of the duke of Maine and his wife.

The whole of the mystery was now explained : Dubois had long been aware of the treasonable practices that were taking place in the French capital, and had determined to turn them to his advantage, by exciting a burst of popular indignation, in the midst of which, though temporary and confined, he should be enabled to make a declaration of war against Spain, which all France would view with indifference, if not with approbation; and which the other nations of Europe would applaud, as the consequences, not of a premeditated design to oppress or enfeeble the Spanish monarch, or even to destroy his minister, but of a long forbearing, but generous, spirit, exasperated by injuries which could no longer be endured.

The conspiracy of prince Cellamare need not be farther noticed here, as it is detailed more at large in another place; and it is only necessary to observe, that it was happy for Dubois that St. Aignan, the French ambassador in Madrid, had been more discreet and cautious than the Spanish ambassador in Paris; for there can be no doubt whatsoever that the intrigues carried on under the direction of the Frenchman were as treasonable, as those directed by Cellamare, if not more so, and that he himself had even more grossly violated the rights of nations. The duke of Orleans was by no means cruel, nor had Dubois himself any passion for bloodshed. The good-humoured regent turned much of the whole conspiracy into ridicule, and teased many of his companions by insinuating that their names had been found amongst the lists of conspirators kept by the Spanish ambassador.

Dubois kept the affair in greater mystery, and used it as a most powerful political engine. Multitudes of arrests continued to take place; just sufficient was published to excite the terrors of all parties implicated in the slightest degree; rumours were industriously spread of the multitudes inculpated, of the ramifications of the

plot into different provinces, of the horrible nature of the conspirators' designs, and of the danger that not only the regent but the whole country had run. It was long, it was very long, it was even many years, before the smallness of the foundation on which all this great fabric had been raised was made known; and a new branch of the conspiracy, in which was comprised the young, brilliant, and libertine, duke de Richelieu, having been discovered in the spring of the following year, served to perpetuate the terror which spread through all ranks of people, who might by any chance have incurred suspicion.

Such was one use made by Dubois of the conspiracy of Cellamare; another was that of exciting a sufficient degree of indignation amongst the French people, to justify and support him in declaring war against Spain, which was accordingly done in the commencement of the year 1719. Marshal Berwick, in command of the French army, now found no difficulty in leading, to a war with Spain, troops who would, in all probability, have deserted from his standard some months before; and hostilities commenced against the cousin of the duke of Orleans without even a murmur amongst the French people. The affairs merely military were transacted with Berwick by Le Blanc, the secretary at war, but all that touched the policy of his proceedings was directed by Dubois. In the correspondence between the minister and the general there still appears that profound devotion to the will of England which has brought an equal stain upon Dubois' honesty and his policy. Mr. Stanhope, the cousin of the English secretary of state, followed the camp of the French marshal; and the capture of the Spanish ports, with the destruction of the navies, which Alberoni was calling into existence, seemed to show the effects of the presence of an envoy from a great maritime state in the camp of the invaders.

At length the misfortunes which attended all his enterprises having removed Alberoni from power in

Spain, the efforts of Dubois, and the other ministers of the allied powers, were employed to bring about a general peace. This was speedily accomplished with Spain, after a degree of resistance, made while the first impetus of Alberoni's genius remained ; but it was with more difficulty that the pacification of the north was accomplished ; and it was not without great sacrifices to the dominant influence of England, that Dubois brought about the object which he had in view.

In the mean time, while the French minister thus laboured in his department, not without a view to the acquisition of greater power in the state, a rival had sprung up in the court of the regent, who, in a very short time, by the force of extraordinary genius, and still more extraordinary pretensions, caused the services even of Dubois to be almost forgotten, and appeared likely to monopolise, not only the whole favour of the regent, but the whole favour of the people also, as he had already monopolised all their attention. This was the famous Scotch financier Law ; who, after many efforts, obtained the full confidence of the duke of Orleans ; inspired the people with a mania for what may be termed mercantile gambling ; and for a time, by a system of artificial credit, in which many important facts in political economy were, for the first time, developed in combination with a thousand extraordinary errors and false principles, restored to the ruined finances of France the semblance of vast prosperity, and excited throughout the country a thirst of gain and of traffic, which, could it have been wisely directed and vigorously supported, might have rendered France one of the greatest mercantile states that Europe has ever seen.

It would be impossible in this place to give a sketch even of the system of Law ; suffice it to say, that it was one founded upon so narrow a base as to be shaken by any accidental circumstance ; and the time soon came when it trembled to its very foundation. Dubois had always regarded the financier with male-

volent jealousy, but he had been afraid to embarrass his operations by any public opposition, lest he should bring ruin upon the regent himself and upon the state, which had been plunged headlong into the financial measures of the Scotch adventurer. He had worked privately, however, to bring about his ruin in the opinion of the regent ; and the duke of Orleans had in consequence kept many of his proceedings with Law secret from his former confidant Dubois.

At length, however, the opposition of the parliament, and some rash steps of Law himself, brought on a crisis which seemed likely to overthrow his whole system ; but at that moment Law, perceiving that nothing could save him but some popular measure, required of the regent that he should dismiss D'Argenson, and recall the chancellor D'Aguesseau. To this the duke immediately consented ; but concealed the proposed measure from Dubois till D'Aguesseau's consent was obtained, when he sent the secretary for foreign affairs, much to his surprise and discomfort, to demand the seals of Argenson, for the purpose of delivering them to the chancellor.

The English ministry had been strongly opposed to Law, and viewed with great apprehension the rise of his power in France, which threatened to counterbalance that of their devoted friend, if not servant, Dubois. Traces of their enmity are found in all the correspondence of the secretary of state during the year 1720 ; and the return of Aguesseau to power, with the clear integrity which Law had established by the examination of the accounts of the bank, was no slight mortification both to lord Stanhope and his friend Dubois. Nevertheless, the minister for foreign affairs looked on calmly upon the financial operations which Law now began to carry on with vigour and activity ; and in these proceedings showed a degree of personal disinterestedness and of zeal for the welfare of the state which does, perhaps, more honour to his character than any other trait which his history affords us.

The financial system of the Scotchman once more began to prosper, at least in appearance ; but this semblance lasted not long. The plague appeared in Provence ; and both by the terrors which it occasioned in France, and the precautions taken by foreign countries against its entrance, acted as a terrible check upon commerce. Various other accidents contributed to diminish public credit ; and the parliament, seeing that Law stood upon the brink of a precipice, hastened by every means to push him over, without the slightest regard for the interests of the country, offering a strange and discreditable contrast to the conduct of the minister. All the edicts which were sent down to the parliament by the regent, for the purpose of meeting the difficulties of the moment, and of allaying the panic which was now spreading rapidly, were rejected by the parliament with cool insolence, so that every day hurried on the catastrophe, and shook the whole of the fabric of that commercial system which had spread its branches through every department of business.

Dubois now perceived that the object of the parliament was evidently revenge, and that it would pursue that purpose to the destruction of the regent and the ruin of the country ; and he stepped forward at once with all his own impetuous energy to trample upon the hydra, which no one else had resolution to encounter. A large body of troops were immediately brought into Paris ; the musketeers took possession of the palace where the parliament assembled ; and an order was transmitted to all the presidents and counsellors of that body, notifying that they were exiled to Pontoise, whither they were commanded to betake themselves immediately. Such an extraordinary exertion of authority had never been executed before. It had been attempted, indeed, under Louis XIV., but had failed ; yet in the present instance not the slightest movement showed any disposition to resistance amongst the people ; and the young musketeers, in possession of the courts of law, amused themselves

with the mock trial of a cat. The parliament remained at Pontoise, amusing itself with feasting and revelry ; and Dubois took measures to prevent any political designs which might be concealed under this apparent frivolity from being carried into execution.

In the mean time, however, the system of Law gradually fell to pieces of itself, and the panic continued to spread amongst the people ; while amongst the class of financiers the spirit of speculation went on as violently as ever. It is clear, however, that Dubois now aided, though by gentle efforts, to get rid of Law ; and at length that talented, but unfortunate, minister fled from France, and took refuge in Venice. The ascendancy of Dubois was complete ; and the English ministry did not fail to congratulate the French secretary of state on an event so advantageous to him and to them.

He, in the mean time, continued to engross the whole favour of the duke of Orleans ; and by various measures, most of them illegal, and many of them unjust, contrived to diminish the extraordinary pressure which the system of Law and its failure had occasioned. In many instances, by seizing upon the speculators in the public funds, who had made enormous fortunes by their fraudulent speculations, he recovered for the government, without any form of trial, a large part of what these gamblers had unjustly obtained ; and at the same time, by submitting all the claims upon the bank to an examination, not only rigorous, but partial and iniquitous, he diminished its responsibilities to an immense amount.

Possessed now of by far the greatest power in the ministry, Dubois was not inattentive to promote his own interest, and to secure his power by all those means which ministers in catholic countries had adopted before him. He had, as early as the period of his negotiations at the Hague, conceived a remote vision of ultimately becoming a cardinal ; and had insinuated in a letter to the count de Nocé, that all the foreign

ministers by whom he was surrounded expected no less for him at the hands of the regent. On first hearing the rumour of such a thing, the duke of Orleans, who could not forget in the statesman, the low born and debauched preceptor, burst forth with indignation, mingled with scorn; but Dubois, who was well acquainted with the instability of his former pupil's character, was not in the least rebuffed by the reports made to him of the severe language employed by the duke, and directed all his efforts to the great object of obtaining the rank of a prince of the church.

It would be impossible to follow, here, through all the involutions and extraordinary intrigues which were now pursued, the subtle spirit of the French minister, in his endeavours to obtain that station against which his character, his whole private life, and most of his public acts, seemed to present insurmountable obstacles. He had supported the Jansenists in opposition to the court of Rome; he had proposed measures to the duke of Orleans, and partly carried them into execution, which tended to overthrow the last vestige of the papal power in France; he had treated with, and shown the greatest favour to, the protestant king of England, and the pertinacious heretics of Holland; and, in fact, it would have appeared that the whole system of his policy was linked with opposition to that church of which he now sought one of the highest dignities. Yet none of these obstacles prevented him from pursuing his purpose; nor were the means he took to effect it less impudent and extraordinary than the purpose itself. The first person he applied to, and the most strenuous supporter which he obtained, was the protestant king of England, who wrote with his own hand to the regent to break to him the secret of Dubois' ambition, and induce him to apply personally for the promotion of his minister.

The king of England was also persuaded to influence the emperor to favour the cause of Dubois. At the same time the pope and his nephew Albani received bribes, and promises of bribes; and, as if to carry

impudence and audacity to its climax, and to show how it can command success, Dubois was tempted to apply to the chevalier de St. George, recognised by the court of Rome as the king of England, to nominate as the English candidate for a place in the conclave the man who had ruined his hopes and expectations; who had rendered the restoration of his family almost impossible; who had driven him with ungenerous haste from his last refuge at Avignon; and whose chief hopes of preferment rested on the house of Hanover. This most audacious proposal was made to the weak representative of a ruined family; and, accompanied by the softening influence of gold, was rendered successful to the highest degree.

In the mean time, however, while the pope offered a dull but stubborn resistance, to the entreaties of a prince who was hateful to him, for the elevation of a licentious and profligate minister whom he contemned, and endeavoured to raise the price of the painful compliance which he saw might be ultimately forced from him to the very highest sum that the avarice of decrepid age could extort, a new object was presented to the ambition of Dubois, which was destined to be the first step to the higher authority he demanded. The cardinal de la Trimouille died at Rome, and the archbishopric of Cambrai became vacant. To it immediately Dubois aspired; and the licentious, irreligious, unprincipled minister, was not ashamed to demand of the prince he had corrupted, the mitre of the pure and virtuous Fénelon.

"Art thou mad?" demanded the prince, on the first mention of such a thing. "Thou, an archbishop! Who would dare to make thee even a priest?"

But Dubois was not to be crushed by a sarcasm; and, as usual, he applied to the very last person who ought to have had any influence in such a transaction, but the one whom he too well knew would give greatest weight to his pretensions. George I. was again applied to; the imperial minister was also in-

terested in his favour; and the regent yielded with a good grace to an act which scandalised the whole of Europe, but which was treated by the licentious court of the Palais Royal as nothing but a matter of ridicule and jest.

In the first instance, however, it was necessary to make a priest of the aspirant to the archbishopric. Noailles, archbishop of Paris, would not suffer his diocese to be polluted by such an act. The archbishop of Rouen, however, was not so scrupulous. The bishop of Nantes was found willing to ordain the minister; and, oh shame to the sacred name of virtue, oh disgrace to the honourable distinction of genius! Massillon himself, the most eloquent, the most talented prelate of his day, was not ashamed to fix his name to the certificate, which attested the purity of morals and ecclesiastical knowledge of the most licentious infidel that ever disgraced the priesthood.

I cannot forbear quoting the observation of a contemporary (the abbé d'Orsanne) upon the conduct of Massillon: "It is impossible to express," he says, "what an impression this conduct produced upon the people of the world, who now believed themselves right in concluding, that the most celebrated preachers, and even the bishops, regarded the truths of religion as a jest." In one morning, Dubois received all the orders of priesthood, and then hurried to Paris to be consecrated archbishop of Cambray. The ceremony took place in the church of the Val de Grace *, in the presence of all the princes and nobles of the French court, headed by the regent. After the ceremony, however, that prince had the undignified good humour to retire from Paris for the day, leaving the magnificent halls of the Palais Royal for Dubois to entertain his princely guests.

The heart of the archbishop, however, was not at ease; for with the bulls which sanctioned his elevation to the archiepiscopal dignity, he had expected the hat of a cardinal, but was disappointed. At the same time, a report

* June 9. 1720.

was industriously spread, that his new clerical dignity would deprive him of that of secretary of state, on account of the necessity of his residing for a certain time in his diocese. This rumour also found its way to England; and Dubois, angry even at the idea that such a thing was possible or necessary, induced the regent to write a letter upon the subject to the French ambassador in London, expressing himself in terms of the most unqualified approbation in regard to the conduct of his minister, and notifying his determination to support him, and continue him in the office which he held.

Scarcely, however, had Dubois been created a priest, raised to the see of Cambray, and received from Tressan and Massillon a certificate of pure life and fitness for the ecclesiastical functions, when an event happened, which we find reported in a despatch of the Prussian minister in Paris to his sovereign, dated the 9th of August, 1720. "A woman of very low extraction," he says, "originally from Hainault, but reduced to the utmost misery, has just declared herself married to the abbé Dubois, and to have had several children by him." Such a circumstance was not favourable to a catholic archbishop; and there can be no doubt, that rumours of the kind were very current in Paris at the time. However that may be, the circumstances are so obscure, that we can arrive at no certainty on the subject. The woman is said to have disappeared very shortly after her arrival in Paris; and Duclos gives a long account of the method which Dubois took to bribe one alleged wife to secrecy, and to destroy all the proofs of the marriage; sending Breteuil, intendant of Limoges, to make the priest of the parish where they were married drunk, tear the leaf out of the register which contained the certificate, and to terrify the notary who drew up the contract of marriage to efface the minute from his official books. However, it is to be remarked, that Duclos and the Prussian minister differ in regard to the country of the supposed wife; and I am inclined

to believe, with Lemontey, that no such marriage ever really took place.

The archbishopric of Cambray was not sufficient to satisfy the ambition of Dubois, and he still pursued with unceasing activity his applications to the court of Rome, carrying on his correspondence upon the subject under the absurd name of Madame Guadagne. Bribes rained into the hands of the pope and of his nephew ; but Dubois found that neither foreign influence nor French gold were sufficient to obtain his promotion without taking some decisive step to show that it was his determination for the future to support the authority of the catholic church in France. We cannot trace the quarrels of the Jansenists in France, nor even show the part which Dubois and the regent had taken in opposition to the church of Rome. Suffice it to say, that the famous bull *Unigenitus* had been condemned by the cardinal de Noailles, archbishop of Paris, and had been rejected by the parliament of the French capital ; and Dubois now undertook the difficult task of persuading Noailles to explain away his objections, and compromise the principles of his sect, and to force the parliament to receive that which they had treated with indignant scorn. In both these attempts he succeeded ; the cardinal de Noailles was induced to yield to the arguments of Massillon and Aguesseau ; and, as the price of their return to Paris from Pontoise, the members of the parliament consented to register the bull.

All seemed prepared for the elevation of Dubois ; but the death of Clement XI. suddenly changed the whole scene, and left a new drama to be acted upon a different stage. France and Austria united, however, could determine the contest for the chair of St. Peter as seemed best to them ; and it was in consequence determined to sell the tiara to whoever would agree to nominate Dubois. After a number of sickening intrigues, the arrangement was made, and cardinal Conti, being elevated to the papal throne, despatched the hat to Dubois as soon as he had gained the last franc that could be wrung from the

impoverished treasury of France.* Eight millions of francs were employed at different times in obtaining this honour for the favourite of the duke of Orleans; but that was not considered too great a price for the consciences of so many cardinals.

* Instead of displaying the pride and presumption usually consequent upon a sudden rise to dignity and power, Dubois surprised all by the display of qualities, on receiving the purple, which might well have become a better man. In paying his visits of ceremony to the various members of the royal family of France, he conducted himself with mingled dignity and modesty. The account of his visit to the mother of the duke of Orleans, as given by Duclos, is valuable, inasmuch as the historian cannot be suspected of partiality.

"The audience, which excited the greatest curiosity," he says, "was that of madame. No one was unacquainted with the profound contempt which she had for Dubois. She had never indeed restrained it. He presented himself before her with the demeanour of a man not disconcerted, but full of respect and gratitude. He spoke of his surprise at his new condition, of the lowness of his origin, and of the nothingness out of which the regent had drawn him. Every thing that hate or envy could have reproached him with, he said himself with much dignity, seated himself for a moment on the stool that was presented to him, put on his hat simply to mark the etiquette, rose again, pulling it off almost immediately, and knelt before madame when she advanced to salute him. She could not help avowing, when he was gone, that she was contented with the words and demeanour of a man whose elevation raised her indignation."

Unhappy for France was the elevation of Dubois to the Roman purple; for he failed not to labour to the utmost of his power for the interests of the church of which he had become a member in the country that he ruled; and as the men who governed Rome in that

* July 16. 1721.

day were both bigoted and corrupt, it cannot be considered otherwise than a misfortune to France that their sway should be extended over that country. Another step yet remained to be taken by Dubois; but ere we proceed to notice his next advance in the race of ambition, it is necessary to notice the proceedings consequent to his elevation to the conclave. Knowing that difficulties would be, and had been, raised by the peers of France to yield precedence in the council even to a cardinal, he resolved to wait patiently the return of the cardinal de Rohan, whom he had sent to Rome for the purpose of obtaining his promotion, and to abstain from taking his own place previous to that prelate's arrival. He prepared ever thing, however, for the result he wished to bring about; and, as soon as Rohan returned, caused him to be nominated to the council of the regency. The cardinal took his seat accordingly above the peers, and next to the princes of the blood.

The peers remonstrated, but the duke of Orleans at once decided in favour of the cardinal; and, after murmuring for some time, the dukes proposed to the regent to make a declaration in their favour, importing, that if they consented to sit below the cardinal de Rohan, it should not compromise their right for the future. This, however, was rejected at once by the duke of Orleans, who said, that if they did not choose to sit in the places assigned to them they might absent themselves altogether. They took him at his word, believing themselves to be absolutely necessary; but Dubois and the regent only laughed at the success of their plan; and the minister having opened the way by the cardinal de Rohan, now took his own place in the council of which he ruled all the decisions.

The majority of the king, however, was now approaching; and both Dubois and the duke of Orleans looked with some apprehension to the moment when it would be necessary to resign the sovereign authority into the hands of a boy of thirteen. The cardinal, however, had placed no bound to his ambition, but the height of power

which had been held by Richelieu ; and he now laboured incessantly to prepare the mind of the regent to name him prime minister before the king became of age, as a prelude to the attainment of the same place under the young monarch. He applied himself also to remove from the person of the king the only man who could offer any opposition to the will of his master and himself, and who, by the influence he had gained over Louis XV., as his governor, might, at the majority, have made a successful struggle against those who had so long held all the authority of the state. This was the *maréchal de Villeroy*, a weak, vain, and incapable man, who was easily led into the snares which Dubois did not fail to lay for him.

An open quarrel between Villeroy and Dubois was soon followed by an act of insolence towards the regent. If we are to believe the assertion of the cardinal himself, Villeroy had more than once openly declared that the duke of Orleans should never be alone for a moment with the young king as long as he was governor. At all events, it is probable that the minister induced the regent to believe that such words had been made use of, and the prince determined to put it to the test. On the 10th of August, 1722, after having spent some time in public with the king, the duke of Orleans proposed to the young monarch to retire into his cabinet to speak upon some secret business. Villeroy immediately prepared to follow ; the duke of Orleans forbade him to do so ; the governor continued to insist, and used, it would seem, some offensive expressions. "Sir, you forget yourself," exclaimed the regent, and passing him with an angry frown, quitted the apartment.

Terror now succeeded to daring in the breast of the king's governor ; and the next morning he requested an audience of the regent, which was refused ; but instead, he found himself surrounded by a party of the guard, carried out of a window, and placed in a carriage, which soon bore him to Villeroy, whence he was removed not long after to Lyons.

In the mean while a double marriage had been arranged between the Bourbon dynasties of France and Spain ; and the infanta, not more than five years old, had arrived in Paris in order to be affianced to Louis XV. Dubois immediately perceived the power that the possession of this hostage placed in the hands of a French minister ; and from the very first he took care that the king of Spain should be induced to approve all his acts by the fear of his daughter being sent back to Spain, as in fact was ultimately the case. Within a very few weeks after her arrival, the crafty minister put forth in his letters to Spain the probability of such an event, taking care, however, to attribute the design to his enemies, and to represent himself as the strongest defender of the cause of the princess. When Villeroy was removed, no person remained near the person of the young king who could in any degree counterbalance the influence of the cardinal and the duke of Orleans, except indeed Fleury his preceptor. But the time for Fleury's elevation was not yet come, as Dubois well knew, though it is probable that that deep-seeing minister divined the after success of the king's preceptor, when, on being raised to the dignity of cardinal, he detached his own cross and gave it to Fleury, saying, that it brought good luck.

While he was working the downfall of Villeroy, however, Dubois was labouring for his own elevation to the highest office to which he could aspire. The first difficulty was with the duke of Orleans himself, who showed some degree of unwillingness to strip himself openly of so much authority ; but Dubois, while he concealed his manœuvres with but little art, employed the English minister and the keeper of the seals to plead his cause with the regent, who was soon led to perceive or imagine that the elevation of his favourite might tend to the permanence of his own power. Before the end of August Dubois was accordingly appointed prime minister ; and he now applied himself assiduously to gain the good will of the young king, though there is every reason to believe that Louis always regarded him

with dislike. Raised now to the extreme height of power, Dubois became jealous of every part thereof, and as usual, under such circumstances, anxious for every ray of favour which shone from those above him.

He now, in concurrence with the duke of Orleans, undertook to give the young king instructions on the art of governing, and a series of lectures were drawn up, to which Louis XV. listened with cold indifference. Those lectures, indeed, were as much directed to the justification of all the measures of the regency as to the enlightenment of the young monarch upon affairs of state; but they, nevertheless, succeeded to a certain degree in both objects: and Louis, while he acquired some information in regard to the government of his own kingdom, learned to yield as implicitly to the dictation of his uncle after his majority as he had done before. Dubois, however, lost no opportunity of securing the influence of his patron, as well as his own, by the removal of all who could in any degree endanger their authority. Means were taken to counterbalance the power of the duke of Bourbon. Le Blanc, the secretary at war, was dismissed and exiled, and the power of the family of Orleans consolidated and supported. No sooner had the young king reached the age of his majority, on the 15th of February, 1723, than the position held by the duke of Orleans and his favourite was confirmed by Louis XV., the one retaining the presidency of the councils, the other the post of prime minister: the exile of D'Aguesseau, Noailles, and Villeroy, was assured by an order under the king's own hand, and every thing evinced the durability of the power which Dubois had obtained.

Well may ambition be called insatiable. With Dubois it had now become a perfect madness. Bending under years and infirmities, enfeebled by debauchery, crowned with immense success, holding all the real power of a great realm, the cardinal still grasped at more. Whether small or great, reasonable or unreasonable, every thing that came within his view was snatched at as he was hurrying to the tomb. He sought to

raise Cambray into a sovereignty for himself ; he tried to add the office of chancellor to that he already enjoyed ; he presided in the assembly of the clergy of France ; he obtained a seat in the Academie Française ; he excelled the king and the duke of Orleans in the splendour of his household, the luxury of his table, and the number of his courtiers ; and every benefice that became vacant he strove greedily to obtain. All yielded to the frantic energy of his ambition : the duke of Orleans himself, though tired of, and disgusted with, the creature he had raised from the dust, did not strive to resist a power to which he had so often yielded. Canillac and Nocé, two of his most devoted servants, were sacrificed to the jealousy of Dubois ; and it is probable that, had the cardinal lived much longer, the affection of his patron would have been totally alienated.

Death, however, was stretching forth his arm to strike Dubois in the moment of his greatest success ; and though the ambitious minister felt the approach of this last great enemy, he concealed from himself the facts of his situation, and endeavoured to conceal it also from others. All his letters at this period show an extraordinary anxiety to prevent the report of his illness or his danger from spreading ; and it was probably the same desire to mask his situation from those around, which induced him to mount on horseback, and present himself to the royal troops on the occasion of a review at Meudon, although suffering at the time from an internal abscess of the most painful kind. His agonies, however, soon compelled him to quit the field, and he was carried back to the palace in a dying state. From thence he was borne in a litter to his apartments at Versailles, in order to undergo an operation which the surgeons declared to be absolutely necessary to save his life. A monk was sent for to give him the support of the church ; but Dubois refused to be aided in the last duties by any but one of equal rank with himself ; and in the mean while the surgeons declared that the operation could not be delayed. Dubois, however, now showed as great a want

of resolution as he had formerly displayed determination, and he positively refused to submit to the knife.

The duke of Orleans, however, being informed of the fact, hastened from Meudon, and entering the chamber of the sick man, exclaimed, "How now, cardinal! What has become of your firmness?"

"Oh, my lord," replied the dying man, "I have no courage in regard to bodily pain."

"Listen," replied the prince, who, whatever might be his feelings, showed the same kindness towards his former favourite as before, "it is an affair of life or death with you, and I quit not your chamber till the operation is performed." The surgeons were again called in, and whether the cardinal liked it or not, the operation took place in the midst of his curses and imprecations. The next morning mortification appeared, and before night Dubois was no more.

His body was carried to Paris, and lay in state during eight days in the church of St. Honoré. Amongst a people where every thing is levity, it became the fashion, during those eight days, to go and sprinkle with holy water, amidst peals of laughter, the body of a man who was worthy of being abhorred while living, and pitied, though contemned, when dead.

The regent, though he had behaved with generous kindness to Dubois to the last, could not help rejoicing at being delivered from one for whose baseness he blushed every time he conferred an honour or a favour upon him. No sooner was the minister dead, than the duke wrote to Nocé to recall him, saying, "Dead the beast! Dead the poison! Nocé came back." But after a few hours' reflection, he restrained all acerbity of feeling; and when others expressed aloud those sentiments which they dared not even mutter before Dubois while living, the duke replied, "Peace to the living! Rest to the dead!"

Little need be said of the character of Dubois, who, though certainly a man of very great political talent, by no means deserved the name of a great statesman. He

was subtle, penetrating, active, energetic ; he had a profound knowledge of men's weaknesses, and an insight into the characters of nations ; but he was impetuous, irritable, and imprudent, ignorant of great purposes of good, and incapable of believing in virtue. That he was full of vices as a man there can be little doubt ; but those vices were probably magnified by the malignity of those who envied his advancement ; and it is not impossible, that amongst the fabrications of his enemies may be the report of his having received bribes from England. Monsieur de Rayneval, who had his papers so long in his hands, discovered no trace of this act of baseness, and died convinced that the rumour was unjust ; and in estimating the truth of all such accusations against Dubois, we must remember that he rose from the dregs of the people, to the greatest power in the state, elbowing from his path a herd of nobles as ambitious, avaricious, and profligate as himself.

Dubois was small, meagre, and sharp in the face, resembling, according to some descriptions, a fox, and according to others, a ferret. Lying and swearing were his ordinary habits, and the fits of passion to which he occasionally gave way approached to frenzy ; but it is false that he drank, or that he gamed, and equally false that he neglected the business of the state for the pursuit of secret pleasures. The immense mass of his correspondence proves that he laboured as few have laboured ; and the general scheme of his daily occupation, which he left behind him, shows that he was as indefatigable a minister as Henry IV. was a king.

I subjoin some observations of Lemontey upon the offer of surrendering Gibraltar, supposed to have been made by the British government ; but although I have in some degree adopted Lemontey's view in the text, yet I have since met with a letter of Dubois, which affords strong proof that lord Stanhope had actually authorised the French regent to offer the cession of that fortress to Spain. I add the letter to Lemontey's observations, that the reader may judge for himself.

The first extract which I shall give is the letter of Dubois to the Marquis de Nancré, of the 17th February ; on which Lemontey founds his argument that the offer of the cession of Gibraltar was all an illusion, thrown out at hazard : —

“ Quelque temps après mon arrivée, raisonnant avec my lord Stanhope sur le peu d'étoffe qu'il y avait pour contenter les parties intéressées au traité, et les difficultés qu'on trouverait sur *Porto-Lougone* et la Toscane, et lui ayant lâché que si l'Angleterre pouvait céder à l'Espagne Gibraltar, cela serait capable de déterminer le Roi catholique à faire sa paix ; il me répondit que si cela pouvait terminer cette affaire, quoiqu'en faisant faire cette cession il risquât sa tête, il le tenterait, et ne doutait pas de réussir ; ce qu'il me pria en même temps de ne découvrir à personne, sans exception même de Votre Altesse Royale, ce qui m'oblige de la supplier de me garder un secret d'honneur qui soit impénétrable.

“ Cette parole échappée dans une conférence, sans délibération du Roi ni du conseil, eut peu de suite en Angleterre. Dubois pensa néanmoins qu'on pouvait la jeter dans le chaos des négociations qu'entretenait Alberoui. ‘ Si M. de Nancré va à Madrid,’ écrit-il au Régent, ‘ il pourra parler de Gibraltar au Cardinal.’ (*Lettre de Dubois du 31 janvier 1718.*) Mais M. de Nancré réclama de Dubois lui-même une instruction plus positive, et celui-ci lui répondit en ces termes : ‘ Vous ne devez point être en peine de l'article de Gibraltar, ni souhaiter pour cela aucune lettre du Roi d'Angleterre qu'on n'a jamais eu intention de vous donner, ni aucune lettre de my lord Stanhope. Il suffira de dire au Cardinal que Son Altesse Royale ne peut pas l'obtenir ou par échange, ou par argent, ou autrement. Elle ne le pressera pas d'accéder, et l'en dispensera.’ ” (*Lettre de Dubois au Marquis de Nancré, du 17 février.*)

On this he argues as follows : —

“ On sent bien qu'une offre ainsi conçue, et à laquelle le Colonel Stanhope, ambassadeur d'Angleterre, ne voulut prendre aucune part, fit peu d'impression sur Alberoni, entraîné d'ailleurs par d'autres espérances. On se prépara donc à la guerre. Le but principal de Dubois dans la rédaction de son manifeste, était de rendre le cardinal odieux et suspect aux Espagnols, et rien ne le remplissait mieux que l'offre et le refus de Gibraltar. Mais il fallait l'assentiment du cabinet anglais, et Dubois lui écrit le 7 Septembre : ‘ On ne parlera pas dans les manifestes de la cession de Gibraltar, à moins que l'Angleterre n'y su-

torise.' Il en reçoit aussitôt la permission suivante : ' Vous pouvez insérer dans votre manifeste que monseigneur le Régent s'était fait fort de procurer au Roi d'Espagne la cession de Gibraltar, pourvu que les termes soient ménagés de manière à ne pas exprimer un engagement positif de notre part.' " (*Lettre de milord Stanhope à Dubois, du 20 décembre.*)

" Le sort des armes ayant forcé Philippe V. d'accéder à la triple alliance, il réclama vivement la promesse relative à Gibraltar. Le Régent fit partir pour Londres le Comte de Senectères chargé d'appuyer cette demande. La réponse du ministre était facile à prévoir ; ils répondirent qu'il n'était plus temps de s'occuper d'une proposition que la guerre avait anéantie, et pour prévenir toute réplique, ils firent tonner quelques orateurs dans la chambre des communes contre les traîtres qui parleraient de céder Gibraltar. Dubois écrivit que ' cette incident mettait le Régent dans un état d'horreur et de désespoir,' (*Lettre à milord Stanhope, du 17 février 1720,*) et content de cette hyperbole, il abandonna une affaire dont il ne désirait point le succès."

The letter of Dubois, however, which Lemontey did not think fit to publish, deserves much greater attention than he has bestowed upon it, and would strongly tend to prove that a formal promise of the cession of Gibraltar had been made. It is as follows, and bears much more the tone of a confidential communication than of a public despatch, intended only to serve the purpose of covering a deceit : —

" En recevant ce matin, milord, la dépêche de M. Des-touches, du 12 de ce mois, j'ai vu avec beaucoup d'étonnement et de déplaisir l'article qui regarde Gibraltar ; mais, l'ayant communiqué cet après dîné à M. le duc d'Orléans, je sors d'auprès de lui, après une conversation de deux heures, accablé du désespoir où la réponse à cet article l'a jeté. Il est si frappé du déshonneur de pouvoir être justement accusé d'avoir abusé de la confiance que le Roi d'Espagne a eue en lui, et de lui avoir manqué de foi sur les paroles non interrompues qui lui ont été données de la part du Roi de la Grande Bretagne, qu'il n'en peut soutenir l'horreur. Il ne peut mettre ensemble la fidélité et la délicatesse qu'il a eue dans tout le cours d'alliance, pour tout ce qui a pu convenir et plaire au Roi votre maître, et l'injure qu'on lui fait en retirant les paroles qu'on lui a permis de donner. J'ai mis en usage toutes les excuses, toutes les espérances, et tous les adoucissements que mon esprit m'a pu fournir ; mais je n'ai pu détourner un

moment sa vue de l'affront qu'il va recevoir à la face de toute l'Europe, et du coup mortel et inévitable que ce coup lui portera en France. Je ne vous ferai point, milord, le détail de ces réflexions, qui m'affligent mortellement ; je n'envisage, dans ce moment, d'autre consolation que celle de vous faire confidence de la plaie profonde et de la révolution que votre réponse a faite dans ce prince ; et je dépêche, à l'insu de tout personne, ce courrier, pour vous faire part de l'état où je l'ai laissé, et de celui où je me trouve à la vue de sa douleur, que je ne puis ni soulager ni condamner, et qui nous expose à tant de dangers. J'ai cru ne devoir pas différer un instant à vous informer de cette situation : je ne suis pourtant, ni ce que j'ai à vous demander, ni ce que je puis espérer, ni ce que je puis faire pour détourner tout ce que je crains. Malheureusement, cette affaire est d'une espèce à ne me pas laisser l'espérance de trouver un seul homme qui veuille me seconder pour tâcher decalmer sa douleur. Quoi qu'il arrive, je vous prie d'être persuadé que je serai toute ma vie le même à votre égard. Gardez-moi un secret inviolable sur cette lettre." (17 Février, 1720.)

The account which Lemontry gives of the manner in which the whole chimera of the cession of Gibraltar was devised and gradually swelled into a monster of importance is amusing, but unsatisfactory, to any one who is not disposed to trust more to imagination than authority. It must be given, however, in order to make our view of the case complete : —

"Une anecdote assez obscure que je vais rapporter a probablement donné naissance à la fable de Gibraltar.

"On se souvient de l'italien Marini, l'un des espions de Monsieur Le Blanc, qui, pendant la conspiration de Cellamare, entraîna dans un piège le duc de Richelieu. Après la mort du Régent, il se vendit aux ennemis de son bienfaiteur, dirigea les recherches contre les prétendus assassins de M. Paris, et fit arrêter beaucoup d'honnêtes gens. Mais, à la disgrâce de M. le duc, il fut enfermé deux années à la Bastille, dépouillé de son grade et de sa pension, et ensuite chassé de France dans un dénuement absolu. Il se trouvait à Livourne en 1729, vivant d'intrigue et de jeu, un jour couvert de drap d'or et le lendemain de haillons, mais conservant toujours une extrême impudence. C'était un petit homme ayant les traits rudes, les yeux hardis, le teint et la parole d'une grossièreté remarquable.

"La France était alors embarrassée dans un dédale de n(-

gociations pour concilier l'Espagne, l'Autriche, et l'Angleterre, et garantir l'établissement promis à Don Carlos en Italie. Le comte Marini profita de ces circonstances pour s'introduire auprès du chevalier de Moy, notre consul à Livourne, et le captura si bien qu'il le fit consentir à envoyer à la cour plusieurs lettres de cet intrigant. C'est dans ces lettres mêmes adressées au garde-des-sceaux Chauvelin, et au Cardinal Fleury, que je trouve les inventions dont il s'était servi pour séduire le conseil, et par lesquelles il se flattait de recouvrer en France son premier crédit.

“ D'abord, pour ses desculper de ses vexations pendant le ministère de M. le Duc, il commence par assurer qu'il y a été forcé sous menace de perdre la vie, par la marquise de Prye, et que d'ailleurs il ne s'est chargé de rien, qu'à la prière de madame la duchesse mère, et comme moyen de tromper son fils, ce qu'il n'a pas manqué de faire. Après cette étrange apologie, il en revient à ses services diplomatiques. Il raconte que le duc d'Orléans ayant en le dessein de satisfaire l'Espagne par la restitution de Gibraltar, il le chargea de traiter secrètement cette affaire avec le cabinet britannique. Il négocia en effet si habilement que les deux principaux ministres de feu Roi George I^{er}. convinrent que, sous prétexte d'une surprise arrangée d'avance, la place serait livrée aux Espagnols. Le Roi devait signer les ordres destinés à masquer l'opération aussitôt qu'une somme très-considérable aurait été déposée chez un notaire de Bruxelles. Si la chose n'eût pas lieu, ce fut uniquement par un changement de volonté de M. le Régent. Or, des deux ministres avec qu'il traita, l'un vit encore, et siège dans le cabinet de George II. Il sera très-facile au comte Marini de renouer avec lui leurs premiers rapports, et de terminer promptement l'affaire de Don Carlos, bien moins délicate que celle de Gibraltar. En conséquence il offre son dévouement aux ministres français, demande qu'on lui restitue son grade et sa pension, ou qu'au moins on lui renvoi dès à présent un sauf-conduit pour revenir en France, et développer à M. le cardinal ses ressources infaillibles pour le succès de la nouvelle négociation.

“ Les ministres ne se laissèrent pas éblouir aussi facilement que le consul, et firent adresser à Marini, par le chevalier de Moy, quelques questions embarrassantes. On le somma de montrer ses pouvoirs et ses instructions pour l'affaire de Gibraltar, et il répondit qu'il n'en avoit point reçu. On lui demanda au moins la lettre du Régent, et il alléguait qu'il l'avait remise au Roi d'Angleterre. On lui objecta qu'il n'existait pas en France la moindre trace de cette mission, et il dit que le duc d'Orléans avait agi à l'insu de ses ministres, et traité

directment avec lui. Poussé par d'autres difficultés qu'il ne sut pas résoudre plus pertinemment, il se réduisit à soutenir que le Régent l'avait créé maréchal-de-camp, et lui avait donné une pension de 6000 liv., et que des faveurs pareilles sur la tête d'un étranger supposaient nécessairement la reconnaissance d'un grand service. / Cet argument, le seul, en effet, qui eut une base de vérité, toucha peu les ministres, parce qu'ils savaient trop bien que, sous un gouvernement faible ou corrompu, il n'est pas rare de prostituer les dignités à des misérables, et de sacrifier les deniers public au salaire d'actions infames. M. de Chauvelin ordonna au chevalier de Moy de cesser toute communication avec un hableur aussi effronté."

CARDINAL ALBERONI.

BORN 1664, DIED 1752.

THERE are, perhaps, very few instances to be found in history, of men who have risen from so low an origin to so high a pitch of power as Alberoni, with so few of the qualities which seem necessary to eminence. Julius Alberoni was born in the month of March*, 1664, in or near the small city of Placentia, in northern Italy. His father was a gardener, in very poor circumstances; and nothing in his condition held out the least prospect of his ever bursting those bonds which bind us to our original lot in life.

The early history of all such men is obscure; for while they, themselves, in general endeavour, in their after elevation, to cast a veil over their former station, the malice of the envious is not contented with displaying their previous littleness, without adding degrading particulars, either forged or ill ascertained. The general history, however, given of Alberoni's youthful years, represents him as receiving the first rudiments of education from the priest of his own parish, who had noticed his activity and intelligence, and took him into his house as a common servant. Some friars, who were either struck with his abilities, or amused by his boyish gaiety, gave him farther instruction; and having been appointed to a petty office in the cathedral—that of bell-ringer it is said—he completed his education under the ecclesiastics attached thereunto.

* Others, amongst whom is Poggiali, give a different account of Alberoni's early life. They place his birth in May, and say, that after working under his father for some years, he became the servant of a sexton of two churches in Placentia, and that it was not till after he had been with him some time that he attracted the notice of a priest, who gave him some instructions in reading and in the Latin language. They add, however, a fact of which I have no doubt, that he afterwards received much farther and more important instruction in the school of the Jesuits, who, with all their faults, were ever discerning of merit, and who, indeed, did more to civilise and direct the progress of society in Europe than perhaps any other body.

While thus serving in the cathedral, the pliancy or his disposition, and a peculiar turn for that species of broad humour, which forms a singular feature in the Italian character, gained him many friends and protectors ; while his natural shrewdness and instinctive perception of those who were likely to fall and those who were likely to rise, insured him against making any formidable enemies.

Such is the usual account of the first rise of Alberoni ; but there must have been much more to account for his progress between the age of twelve years, at which period he is said to have quitted the occupation of a gardener's boy, and that later period, at which the mingling of his history with public events enables us to trace it more distinctly. To his buffoonery we will give credit, as too many anecdotes thereof are related to admit a doubt, that though several of those tales might be false, the principal fact was not without foundation. But, as well as talents for this lowest species of wit, Alberoni must have possessed genius of a much higher order to enable him to overcome the difficulties that surrounded him, and also must have felt the strongest desire for information and instruction, to induce him to seize, with such prompt avidity, every means of gaining knowledge that presented itself. He must have been possessed of great powers of application, of infinite industry, and of enlarged capacity ; and that he was not occasionally destitute of strong affections, nay, nor of gratitude itself, the rarest of all virtues in the aspiring and ambitious, is rendered more than probable, by the circumstances attending his first departure from the place of his birth.

That departure took place, it would appear, shortly after his having received the minor orders of the church, obtained as the fruits of his constant assiduity both in the pursuit of knowledge, and of favour with those above him. But his abandonment of his native city, and of the scenes in which he had already pushed his fortunes so far, was in order to accompany one who had shown himself a friend and benefactor, but who

was no longer in a situation to hold out any prospect of farther patronage. Ignatius Gardini, a native of Ravenna, had for some time held the office of judge in one of the criminal courts of Placentia ; but having incurred the anger of the duke of Parma, he was deprived of his post, and found it expedient to retire as speedily as possible from the states of the irritated prince. The talents and pleasing manners of the young Alberoni had gained him the friendship and protection of Gardini while that officer was in authority ; and the young aspirant determined to quit his prospects in Placentia, and accompany his benefactor into exile.

Though there appeared no probability of this proof of a grateful heart ever being beneficial to Alberoni, it was but one step in his advance to greatness. The place chosen by Gardini as his abode was naturally his native city of Ravenna, and thither Alberoni accompanied him ; but in a decayed and decaying town, where no longer dwelt the pomp and power of other days, his time would have passed in painful inactivity, useless to others and to his own advancement, had not an acquaintance which he now formed with the vice-legate, count Barni, opened a new path to his ambition. His introduction to the papal representative in Ravenna was doubtless brought about by the friendship of Gardini ; but no sooner was he known to count Barni, than his pleasing manners, good humour, and lively drollery, endeared him to that personage, as they did, indeed, to all with whom he became acquainted, in a manner the most remarkable.

The table of the vice-legate was now constantly open to the young adventurer ; and while Barni found, in the wit and jocularity of Alberoni, relief from the tedium of his sojourn in the dull city of Ravenna, neither he himself nor probably any of his guests ever contemplated the chance of the young Parmesan, who acted the part of buffoon with so much liveliness, becoming in a few years one of the chief movers in the great affairs of European policy. By some it has been asserted, that before quitting Placentia Alberoni had entered into

priest's orders ; but better authority, as it appears to me, has been brought forward to show that such was not the case ; and had it been so, Barni would have found no difficulty in providing the young adventurer with some professional appointment in his household, which would have attached him closely to his person. On the contrary, however, the only post which at that time he thought of conferring on his entertaining guest, was that of intendant of his household, a situation for which the talents and disposition of the future minister were utterly unfit ; and it soon became evident to the vice-legaie, that his affairs were falling into disorder under the unwise management of Alberoni.

About that time Barni was elevated to the vacant see of Placentia, and thither Alberoni returned in the train of the prelate. He now, according to the best accounts of his early life, took priest's orders, and entered the church as a profession. In 1690, at the age of twenty-six, he was provided with a small curacy, and, very shortly after, obtained a stall in the cathedral of his native town. His sphere of action, however, was not destined to be there ; and we find him ere long accompanying the nephew of the bishop, count Giovanni Baptista Barni, to Rome, as his preceptor. His real situation seems to have been more that of companion than instructor ; and the less favourable accounts of the future minister's life insist that he fulfilled in the imperial city one of the least honourable offices of the pagan deity Mercury about the person of his noble pupil. The truth or falsehood of the assertion cannot now be ascertained ; but it is by no means improbable that such was the case. A youth in the situation of count Barni was not unlikely to require such services of an unscrupulous follower ; and Alberoni showed, in many instances, that he would suffer no indignity to stand in the way of his advancement in life.

Again a new path was about to be opened for the steps of the adventurer. The young count Barni was accompanied, we have every reason to believe, by count

Roncovieri, during his journey from Parma to Rome; and if not, became his intimate acquaintance in the latter city. With him Alberoni pursued the same insinuating course which he had followed with others, and with the same success. Roncovieri became his friend and protector; and an opportunity very soon occurred of advancing the fortunes of him whom he sought to benefit. During his stay in Rome Alberoni, with that diligent and unceasing avidity for the acquisition of knowledge which he displayed throughout the whole of his youth, gave up a great portion of his time to making himself master of the French language, and thus opened for himself a new source of utility and advancement.

Not long after, Roncovieri was nominated bishop of the small town of Borgo di S. Donnino, and proceeded to take possession of his see. Whether Alberoni accompanied him thither or not does not appear; but we very soon find him engaged in a negotiation intrusted to the care of that young nobleman. The army of the duke of Vendôme was at this time raising heavy contributions in the small state of Parma, and Roncovieri was directed by the duke of Parma to persuade the French general either to turn his footsteps elsewhere, or to be more moderate in his demands upon the country. Brave, skilful, and determined, Vendôme showed as a general the highest qualities, but as a man, he was not only sensual and depraved, but eccentric in the highest degree.

It would appear that Roncovieri himself was unacquainted with the French language, and he took with him Alberoni, to act as a kind of secretary and interpreter in his communications with the French general. On reaching the head quarters of Vendôme, the Parmesan envoy was immediately admitted; when, to his horror and surprise, he found the duke, who was both dirty in his person, and his manners, engaged in the most humiliating function of our nature. Feeling himself insulted as a gentleman and an ambassador, Ron-

covieri instantly retired ; but Alberoni, whose dignity did not suffer in the same manner, remained jesting* with the French commander, with the same grossness and indecency, of which the other had set him so worthy an example.

The humour of the interpreter suited the eccentric Vendôme much better than the humour of the plenipotentiary, and Alberoni remained at the camp after Roncovieri had quitted it, conducting the whole negotiation for the duke of Parma. Vendôme, on his part, was very well pleased that Roncovieri, disgusted with his brutality, had left the affairs, with which he was charged, in the hands of so agreeable a substitute. Every day in Alberoni he discovered new qualities calculated to gratify the grosser parts of his nature. Greedy of flattery to the highest degree, Vendôme received at the hands of Alberoni a sufficient quantity to have disgusted any other man. That flattery, however, was seasoned by a degree of wit and humour which made it palatable even to others who heard it. The grossness also of the French commander was gratified by licentious conversation and obscene jests ; nor was even his epicurism left unsatisfied by his new acquaintance. The son of the gardener, well acquainted with the cookery of his native land, busied himself in the kitchen of the French prince, and prepared with his own hand many a savoury dish, which he was afterwards to partake of with the duke, and season with his witty and libertine conversation.

The favour of Vendôme was thus acquired, and sufficient advantages accrued to the duke of Parma from the mediation of Alberoni, to induce that prince to continue him as his agent throughout the negotiations with the French general, and to reward his services with a canonry in the cathedral of his capital, a pension, and a

* The expression of Alberoni, on a somewhat indecent exhibition made by the duke, was, "Ah! culo di angelo." There are various other accounts of his first introduction to Vendôme, but the one I have given seems to me the most authentic ; and though, perhaps, the particulars, as they have come down to us, may be a little caricatured, they are not all out of keeping with the character of the two men to whom they refer.

house in the city. He resided for some time, partly in the French camp, partly in Parma itself ; and while in the city he received in his dwelling, and was of much service to various French officers of distinction, who were universally captivated by his manners, and trumpeted his praises to Vendôme, who was already sufficiently well disposed to attach the aspiring ecclesiastic to himself.

Of his person we have at this time a curious picture, which would show, that external advantages had certainly no share in the influence which he so easily obtained over the minds of all with whom he was brought in contact. He was, we are told, naturally extremely short, with immensely broad shoulders, scarcely any neck, and an enormous head, which, together with a large face and a remarkably swarthy complexion, rendered him an object not likely to attract at first sight.

The advantages which Mazarin had derived from attaching himself to the interests of France were probably not lost upon Alberoni, who, whether he did or did not propose to himself the conduct of the favourite minister of Anne of Austria as a model, showed a strong disposition to cultivate the good graces of the French party in Italy. By some, he is said to have attached himself entirely to Vendôme, while that commander was still in Italy ; by others, not to have entered immediately into his service, till he quitted that country and returned to France. It is certain, however, that before the French general did so, he had without difficulty engaged the Parmesan ecclesiastic to quit the petty court to which he had been attached, and to try his fortunes upon a new scene. He was accordingly regularly installed as the confidential secretary of that great commander. Through his hands passed all the most important affairs of Vendôme ; and the French general was never tired of singing the praises of a secretary who added such pleasing talents to abilities of a far more important kind.

It would appear, indeed, that the natural presumptuousness of Alberoni's character, and the haughty vio-

lence of Vendôme's, would often break out in spite of the interested subserviency of the one, and the well pleased regard of the other. Thus Alberoni is said to have called upon himself various severe and ungentle reproofs from his coarse and passionate patron, and even to have been caned by him severely in presence of the whole army. Still, however, the supple Italian took it all in good part, bore the beating that he could not resent, and felt perhaps that he deserved, with good humoured buffoonery, and remained, as before, attached to a patron who rewarded his pitiful submission and valuable services by constant protection and every effort to advance his fortunes.

At the conclusion of the campaign in Flanders, Vendôme himself presented Alberoni to Louis XIV., and obtained for him a pension of 1600 francs. In his whole correspondence with the monarch, too, the duke lost no opportunity of lauding the diligence, the talents, and the fidelity, of his Italian secretary; so that, ere long, the fame of Alberoni was supported on a nobler and more solid basis than his licentious wit and amusing buffoonery. During Vendôme's retirement at Anet, however, those pleasant qualities were again brought into full activity, and left no room for discontent and gloom to find an entrance. But Vendôme was not destined to remain long in inactivity. The famous war of the succession broke out in Spain; and the talents of that great commander were required to establish the grandson of Louis XIV., on the throne which had been bequeathed to him by the will of Charles II. Vendôme, however, disgusted with various matters in the past, was unwilling to accept an appointment which implied fatigues, dangers, privations, and, most likely, disappointment and ingratitude.

The French court, under these circumstances, terrified at the defeats of Almenara and Saragossa, was willing to use any means to induce Vendôme to take the command of the Bourbon army in Spain; and Alberoni was applied to, as having more influence with him than any one

else, to work upon his mind and obtain his consent. This he accordingly accomplished. Vendôme complied with the wishes of the king ; and in 1710 set out to put himself at the head of the French army warring in the Peninsula, accompanied by him, still acting as his secretary, who was destined, ere many years had passed, to rule the state to which they went, with almost despotic sway, and to influence the whole affairs of Europe.

When the French commander arrived in Spain the situation of the Bourbon party in that country was most disastrous. Its troops had been defeated ; its generals outmanœuvred ; its enemy was in possession of the capital. Philip, the grandson of Louis XIV., was neither without energy nor without talents ; but that energy was only excited in moments of the most extraordinary danger ; those talents were only displayed when that energy was so excited. The Bourbon party, however, possessed one great point of strength, which existed totally independent of the successes of its armies, or the abilities of its king. This was the inherent hatred of the Castilian people to the yoke of the house of Austria, and their attachment to the Bourbon family, as affording a change, if not a mitigation, of the ruling power. It was in vain that the Austrian army marched upon Madrid — it was in vain that Charles III., as he called himself, displayed the pomp of an unreal authority to the populace of the capital ; few acclamations greeted him on his arrival, and scanty rejoicings responded to the acclamations of his foreign auxiliaries. He was a conqueror in the country that he called his own, but he was not king thereof. Philip V., with all his faults, with all his weaknesses, was monarch of the hearts of the people ; and Charles retired to rest, after his entrance into the capital, crying, “ Madrid is a desert ! ”

Nevertheless means had been taken by the Austrian advisers of the archduke to guard that territory which they had obtained. Provisional centres of government were appointed in different parts of the country ; and Philip, who was at the time at Valladolid, had almost

given up all hopes of recovering possession of his throne. His grandfather, who had long doubted the success of his efforts upon the Spanish crown, had before this period very nearly abandoned the expectation of extending the Bourbon rule over the Peninsula ; and even while Vendôme was marching towards the frontier, he had despatched Noailles in order to persuade Philip that a voluntary cession of his claims to Spain would be preferable to being driven from that kingdom at the point of the sword. In any other country than that in which it occurred, such a state of things would have appeared utterly desperate ; but the Spanish character acts in so different a manner from that of all other people, that there is rarely a possibility of calculating what result will be produced by any specific combination of circumstances. Zealous, forward, and liberal in words, the Spanish people have been found, for many years, selfish, difficult, and renitent in deeds. With the growing apathy of a decaying people, crushing the energies of a race originally fiery and warlike, and leaving that great spirit to escape in words, which in former days exemplified itself in actions, the nation still retains, in the shape of pertinacious adherence to its determinations, that courage, now a passive but powerful instrument, which formerly proved altogether overpowering in all contests. The people of Castille, almost to a man, remained attached to Philip ; and the archduke lost confidence in the successes of his troops when he saw the little effect produced by those successes on the capital of the kingdom he demanded.

In the mean time Noailles had assembled the grandees in the name of Louis XIV., and then proposed to them, that they should either rally round the throne of his grandson in a body, and, by the powerful support of an united and energetic people, seat him at once upon the throne, or that they should support the wish of Louis, that his grandson should depart from amongst them, and obtain, as an equivalent for his cession of the Spanish crown, the sovereignty of some smaller but independent

state. To the latter proposal, the nobles were as repugnant as the young prince himself, and he took good care to strengthen their objections by every means in his power. Complaints and remonstrances were circulated with much greater freedom than is usual in such assemblies; but the meeting ended in new solicitations addressed to Louis to aid his grandson in recovering the throne of Spain; and Philip himself in the most energetic and determined manner declared to the French ambassador that he would never abandon a people who had shown so much attachment to his person, or a throne on which their affection had placed him.

While these transactions were taking place at Valladolid, Vendôme had been seized with an attack of illness at Bayonne, and remained for some days in that city with Alberoni. He was soon well enough, however, to proceed, and hurried on towards the court, while daily news of the enemies' success were brought to his ears, ending with the tidings that Charles was in possession of Madrid. His confidence in his own resources was not at all shaken by such information, and he merely replied, "If the king, the queen, and the prince, are safe, I will answer for the rest."

But Vendôme found a degree of spirit and energy in the Spanish people which surprised him; and no less in the monarch himself. Both had risen up under the events which seemed destined to crush them, with greater vigour than ever. The defeated armies were rallying round their sovereign; fresh and voluntary levies were taking place on every side; and in the mean while large forces of partisans were harassing the enemy in all his possessions. In fifty days, Vendôme had organised, equipped, and disciplined an army which enabled him to make head against the enemy; and by a rapid march upon the Tagus, where he took up a position at Almaraz, he rendered the junction of the Austrian and Portuguese forces impossible, while he opened a communication for himself with the strong Bourbon corps of Estremadura.

Coincident with the operations of Vendôme, a French force under Noailles entered Catalonia, and marched to lay siege to Girona; and the position of the archduke at Madrid became perilous in the extreme. A retreat upon Arragon was immediately determined; and the prince, escorted by 2000 horse, in order to guard his person from capture, quitted the vicinity of Madrid, leaving his gallant supporter Stanhope and count Staremburg to follow with the allied forces under their command. Staremburg led the advance with the main body of the army and the baggage, while Stanhope, at the head of 6000 men, brought up the rear, with a considerable interval.

The English and Austrian army was followed impetuously by the Bourbon forces led by Vendôme; and at the small town of Brihuega Stanhope was overtaken by the French general, who, while his infantry had passed by the bridge over the Henares, had swam that river at the head of his cavalry, though it was in high flood from the mountains at the time. Stanhope threw himself into Brihuega, though only defended by an old and ruinous wall, and resisted the whole force of the enemy for several hours with the most determined gallantry, keeping up so tremendous a discharge of musketry upon the assailants, that eye-witnesses declared it seemed as if the town itself was on fire. After having waited till nearly evening, however, in hopes of Staremburg's return to his assistance, Stanhope, having seen 1500 of his men killed in the desperate effort to defend an untenable town, was obliged to surrender at discretion.

He had scarcely done so, when Staremburg, and the rest of the allied forces, appeared; and before night, ensued the battle of Villaviciosa, in which Staremburg made a most gallant stand against all the efforts of Vendôme, and repulsed the Bourbon army, retaining possession of the field of battle, though he felt it incumbent upon him to continue his retreat during the night. The Bourbon party was now triumphant through

the greater part of Spain; and about this time took place those changes in the cabinet of queen Anne which eventually detached England from the enemies of Louis XIV., and finally led to an act of pacification by which many of the interests of England were sacrificed to the enmity of faction.

The hopes of the house of Austria, therefore, seemed extinct. In the mean time, however, the pending negotiations for peace, which had become absolutely necessary to Louis XIV., produced a degree of coolness between the courts of France and Spain, which complicated the diplomatic intrigues that had already gone on to a very great extent. The rude manners and haughty demeanour of Vendôme had already alienated all the principal Spanish officers, at the head of whom was Aguilar; and the French general himself soon became jealous of Noailles, who, he had good reason to believe, was more trusted by the court of France than himself. This jealousy was increased in a very great degree by the diplomatic powers which were now intrusted to his rival; but Noailles' ambition soon led him to presume so much upon his advantages as to work his own fall. He determined, while he promoted the interests of France, to rule the court of Madrid, and for that purpose, to create a division between the king and the two persons who had hitherto ruled him. Those persons were, his queen, Maria Louisa of Savoy, and her chief confidant and adviser, the famous princess Orsini, camerara mayor, who at that moment possessed more influence over the mind of Philip and his queen than any other person living.

The personal graces, the high talents, and the noble, though somewhat daring, spirit of Maria Louisa, had bowed her husband devotedly to her sway. She was now, however, sinking under the effects of a distressing malady; and Noailles, with equal cruelty and baseness—cruelty and baseness to be found nowhere but in the records of diplomacy—endeavoured to make that malady the means of alienating the young monarch from the

wife who had shared his adversity, consoled his afflictions, and given him spirits and energy in the moments of difficulty and doubt. The queen had in her favour, however, the king's affection, his moral principles, his practical sense of religion, and his generous and noble, though not very vigorous, mind.

In the princess Orsini, however, Noailles found a still more tremendous and energetic enemy. With her he had at one time been a great favourite, but ingratitude seems to be one of the virtues of courts; and misapprehending his own powers, he determined to overthrow a person, whose authority he miscalculated also. As the princess Orsini, however, had no slight share in the rise of Alberoni to power in Spain, before we conclude the view we are now taking of the circumstances which opened a path for him to greatness in that country, it will be necessary to notice more particularly the history of that extraordinary woman. Sprung from the noble house of La Trimouille, beautiful, talented, and bold, she was totally deficient in those moral qualities which are generally considered the chief virtues of a woman, and was one of a school which had grown up in the corrupt reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., and which held it ridiculous to make even profession of a virtue which they had no intention of practising. Her first husband had been the prince de Chalais; who, exiled from France in consequence of a duel, resided for some time with his young wife in Spain, and she there became habituated to the language, manners, and character of the people. They then removed to Rome, where her morals were not noted for austerity; and her husband dying, she remained for some time dependent upon the affectionate bounty of one or two of the cardinals; who in the end, negotiated a marriage for her with Flavio Orsini duke of Bracciano.

Her free notions in regard to virtue were not at all altered by her marriage with an old Italian prince; but nevertheless, in one of her visits to Paris, she had become intimate with madame de Maintenon, and had

entered with enthusiasm into the mystical system of devotion, which then prevailed at the French court, and which brought human and divine love into an union somewhat too close, and in no degree natural. On the accession of Philip to the throne of Spain, and his marriage with Maria Louisa, she had been appointed *camerara mayor*, which is said to be equivalent to governess of the maids of honour, and which always implies the greatest power in the royal household. That power the princess Orsini had employed in many instances against the wishes and designs of Louis XIV. ; and the French monarch, who was in no degree fond of opposition, had on one occasion forced her to quit Madrid.

She was ordered first to proceed to Rome ; and then, in consequence of the indignant, but resolute, conduct of the Spanish queen, was permitted to take up her abode at Toulouse, where she still continued to govern the court of Spain with more authority than ever. Ultimately she was allowed to go to Versailles, and Louis XIV., finding all his efforts vain to govern the court of Spain without her, endeavoured to gain her to his interests by extraordinary favours, and the flattery of kingly condescension. He afterwards sent her back to Madrid, into which city she made her entrance in triumph, being met by the king and queen at the distance of two leagues from the gates of the city.

Since then she had of course ruled, with but the greater power from her temporary disgrace ; she had shared the reverses of the king and queen, and had ever been the soul of their councils, their stay and support, in the time of adversity. She had now returned with them to Madrid ; and it was to attack her influence, by destroying that of the queen, that Noailles now laboured. Vendôme, on the contrary, was anxious to obtain the co-operation of a person so powerful as the princess Orsini. She was jealous, however, of the authority of that prince, and probably had received offence from his rude and uncereceremonious manners ; and in order to conciliate

her regard, or to thwart her designs against him, Vendôme placed Alberoni at the court of Madrid, with instructions regarding his conduct towards the camerara mayor. Alberoni had already attracted, in some degree, the notice of the court of Spain, and the despatches of Vendôme are filled with his praises; asserting, that very great results were to be attributed to the efforts which he had made to rouse and stimulate the Spaniards in the cause of Philip. Alberoni had also been employed to draw up a plan for the regulation of the Spanish finances, and had been so successful as to obtain a considerable gratification in money as a reward for his services. The scheme, indeed, is generally attributed to Macañaz, afterwards famous as a bold reformer, but at this time an obscure provincial lawyer, whose genius Alberoni seems to have been the first to discover.

The honour, nevertheless, rested with the Italian, who, during the greater part of the campaigns of Vendôme, remained in Madrid as the agent of that great general; and succeeded, by his pleasing manners, and witty, but unscrupulous conversation, not only in obtaining a great portion of the regard of the princess Orsini, whose character was in many respects like his own, but also in removing her jealousy and dislike towards Vendôme. The adventurous Italian, indeed, is accused by some writers of having neglected the interests of his master, in order to secure to himself the affection and protection of the princess. But of this there is little proof; and it is certain that not only did Vendôme entertain no suspicion of the kind, but that feeling he had obtained great advantages by the exertions of Alberoni, he succeeded in procuring for him a considerable pension upon the archbishopric of Valencia. Not long after, however, Alberoni was called to the death-bed of Vendôme*, who expired in his arms, after having for two years conducted, with much success, the military efforts of the Bourbon party in Spain.

* The duke of Vendôme died in the spring of 1712 of an indigestion produced by eating too much of some favourite dishes.

The confidence of the French general in his secretary had been unbounded. No one was acquainted with his plans but Alberoni ; and, seizing the occasion, the ambitious Italian instantly proceeded to Versailles, and laid before Louis XIV. a masterly picture of the state of the Spanish armies, and a complete view of the plans and purposes of the deceased general. Louis, prepossessed with an opinion of his fidelity, was struck with his talents ; distinguished him by various marks of favour ; and sent him back to Madrid with strong recommendations to the princess Orsini. Whether he really did, or did not, hold any ostensible appointment from the court of France I have not been able to discover * ; but he was well received, consulted, and caressed by the court of Madrid, and thenceforward we find him working his way onward to the climax of his fortunes. He, who had once exercised in the utmost poverty the occupation of a gardener's boy, was now wealthy, prosperous, and a courtier. All his services had met reward ; he had accumulated considerable sums from the bounty of liberal masters, and he was possessed of large revenues from the benefices which they had given or obtained for him. But Alberoni was ambitious, and not parsimonious. Gradual acquisition, which contracts the spirit, and hardens the heart of most men, had upon his spirit and heart a different effect ; and he is represented, at this time, as displaying great kindness and liberality to all who approached him, living in moderate splendour, and neither verging towards upstart ostentation, nor miserly parsimony.

The prudence of his conduct, his insinuating and agreeable manners, the strong recommendations of the king of France, and his established habits of intimacy with the principal persons of the court, gave Alberoni a degree of influence which enabled him to serve his native sovereign, and heal the rupture which had been

* Some authors say that he did, others assert that his first ostensible function at the court of Spain was that of *Parmesau chargé d'affaires*. The question, however, is of too little importance to deserve much attention.

produced between the courts of Parma and Madrid, by the acknowledgment of the archduke as king of Spain on the part of the Italian prince. Philip had resented this act by dismissing from his court the Parmesan agent; but now, at the intercession of Alberoni, he signified that he was appeased, and would receive any personage intrusted to manage the affairs of the duke of Parma. Alberoni was rewarded, as probably he expected to be, by the appointment of agent from his native sovereign to the court of Madrid; and that court itself was well pleased at a nomination which gave to a very general favourite, and an able diplomatist, a recognised character and station in the country.

One of the most important events in the whole life of Alberoni took place very shortly after this event. Yielding at length to the wearing progress of a terrible disease, the beautiful and beloved wife of Philip lived only to see her husband firmly seated on the throne, and then closed her eyes for ever. Notwithstanding the strong affection of the monarch for his first wife, it was well known to the whole of his court that his temperament was such as to prevent him remaining long in widowhood; and the most important question in Spanish politics became, who was to share his bed, and rule under his name? To no one was this question of more importance than to the princess Orsini, whose long established authority would of course be confirmed or overthrown by the choice of a new queen. It is probable that her mind had dwelt upon the subject for long, even before the death of Maria Louisa; but it was while the funeral procession of the queen was passing, that her difficulties first found a voice.

She was watching, we are told, the ceremony, in company with Alberoni, when she suddenly exclaimed, "We must find a new wife for the king;" and she began to reckon over the various alliances which Europe offered at that moment.

Alberoni, however, who well knew the game that it was the policy of the princess to play, replied, "You

must find one, easy to be managed, and not likely to meddle with state affairs."

"Where shall we meet with such a one?" demanded the camerara mayor. Alberoni then hastily mentioned various princesses, to each of whom there existed some strong objection. His mind, however, was, during the whole time, fixed upon the great object of obtaining a share in the throne of Spain for Elizabeth Farnese, niece of the reigning duke of Parma, but who herself possessed strong claims, both upon that small sovereignty, and upon the grand duchy of Tuscany, in case of the actual possessors dying childless. After speaking of several others, he at length named her, in a cool and subdued tone, adding, that she was a good-hearted Lombard, fattened upon butter and cheese, brought up at home in the little court of duke Francis her uncle, and who had never heard talk of any thing but sewing and embroidery.

The princess made no reply, but the words sunk deep into her mind, and were remembered afterwards, when she found that more ambitious schemes were not likely to succeed. To those ambitious schemes, however, she undoubtedly devoted her first efforts. The concurring testimony of Alberoni, Philip himself, and his second wife, prove, beyond a doubt, that the first object of the princess Orsini was to obtain for herself the hand of the royal widower. Although her age has not been precisely ascertained, it would appear that she certainly approached her sixtieth year. She nevertheless possessed the remains of beauty; her conversational talents were unrivalled; her power over the mind of the king was great; his passions were strong and uncontrollable by any thing but his religious scruples, and her opportunities of seeing him, and inflaming those passions, as abundant as she could desire.

Immediately after the death of the queen, Philip removed to the palace of the duke of Medina Celi, and there shut himself up in a state of solitude from which every one was excluded but the princess Orsini. She,

as governess of the royal children, might share, without scandal, the dwelling of the king. But, as the palace of the duke was too small to accommodate the whole court, she took possession of a Capuchin convent which joined the Medina palace by an open gallery ; and providing the monks with another abode, caused the gallery to be closed, and breaking through the walls of separation, opened a passage between her own dwelling and that of the monarch. She now ruled the country at her will. The cardinal del Giudice, who had been appointed for the management of foreign affairs, and who joined thereunto the post of grand inquisitor, exercised, in fact, the office of prime minister, was dismissed at her bidding, and sent upon a mission into France. Every other government appointment was changed at her pleasure ; and although, in many instances, she showed great judgment in her choice, and produced many absolute benefits to Spain, she at the same time created a multitude of enemies by the undisguised display of her power, and the violent changes she showed herself disposed to effect.

In the mean while she laboured indefatigably to bend Philip to her ambitious purpose ; and whether her efforts to become his queen were too glaring, or her attempts to excite his passions too gross, she certainly produced upon the mind of the monarch a very different effect to that which she had intended to bring about, and disgusted rather than captivated a delicate and scrupulous prince. He suffered her dominion to continue, however, though he showed himself not at all disposed to gratify her in her designs upon his person ; and some cold and chilling reply made by the king to his confessor, in regard to his connection with madame Orsini, would appear to have opened her eyes to the impolicy of the conduct she was pursuing, and to have alarmed her for the results.

To do away any ill impression from the king's mind, and to lull any suspicion which he might have entertained of her designs, the best means were as-

surely to propose his immediate marriage with some one else: and it is probable that such were the motives which, at the end of three months, induced her to hurry forward the arrangements for his marriage with the princess whom Alberoni had pointed out to her as one so likely to become a tool in her hands. In her proceedings to effect this purpose, she added, by her secrecy and double dealing, to various causes of offence which she had previously given to Louis XIV.: she had already disgusted the king of Spain, during the interval of his widowhood; the greater part of the court in which she lived had long been inimical to her; and, in the end, she was induced to commit, on finding that she had been deceived, a rash and impolitic act, which added to the number of her bitter enemies the queen whom she herself had chosen.

After the whole arrangements for the marriage had been made and the day on which Philip was to be married by proxy, in the city of Parma, had been fixed, information reached the ears of Orsini of the true character and disposition of Elizabeth of Farnese. She now found that that princess was talented, high-spirited, politic, determined, the most opposite in every particular to the person whom Alberoni had represented her to be. With hasty passion, the ambitious Orsini instantly despatched a messenger to Parma, with commands to break off the marriage, and to pause not on the way. He reached that city either on the night before, or the very morning of the nuptials; but the throne of Spain was not to be lost for a punctilio. His errand was discovered; he was met by the agents of the duke at the gates of the city; and his choice was given him:—death if he went forward, reward if he concealed himself for a few hours.

The determination of the courier was soon formed. The marriage took place with great splendour, and the young queen set forth to join her impatient husband, leaving the messenger to communicate his fruitless prohibition after her departure. Proceeding partly by sea,

partly by land, the young queen reached the frontiers of her future dominions; and, at the foot of the Pyrenees, passed several days with her relation, the widowed queen of the last Austrian king of Spain, who now lingered on the frontiers of her former kingdom, living upon a pittance allowed her by her husband's successor. From her accounts, the impression which Elizabeth had received of the princess Orsini was not likely to be improved; and it would seem certain that some private communication respecting the camerara mayor took place between her and Philip on her journey towards Madrid. That the king informed her of the intriguing and ambitious character of the princess would seem beyond all doubt; and that, with a degree of moral cowardice which formed one of his peculiar characteristics, he left his young bride to take the necessary steps for freeing him from a domination which had become odious, is equally clear. To enable her to do so, he furnished her with unlimited authority over the large escort which accompanied her from the frontiers to Madrid; and warned her, that if she missed the very first opportunity, the fascinations of Orsini would render her the mistress even of a queen who hated her.

The whole progress of the young queen towards the capital was known step by step at Madrid; and, as soon as she had passed the frontier, Alberoni set out to meet her as the agent of her father at the Spanish court. The share he had had in her advancement had not been concealed; and at Pampeluna, where they met, Elizabeth received him with every mark of satisfaction, and presented him with more signal tokens of her uncle's gratitude, the patents which raised him to the rank of count and appointed him formally envoy from Parma at Madrid. She then proceeded to talk over with him in private the state of the court of Spain, and informed him of her determination to free herself from the presence of the princess Orsini on their very first interview.

Alberoni, it has been clearly proved, was ignorant of Philip's participation in this purpose; and was terrified

at the very idea of a scheme which was destined, in one moment, to overthrow the whole authority which had been built up with such care during nearly fifteen years. It would seem that he declined all participation in the attempt, and represented the dangers attending upon it ; but the young queen cast down her husband's letter upon the table, exclaiming, " Read that, and fear not." As soon as he beheld the real sentiments of Philip expressed under his own hand, Alberoni had no farther hesitation in choosing his part, but at once entered into the queen's views, and concerted with her the means of effecting them.

At length Elizabeth and her train approached Guadalaxara, where she was to be met by her husband, who had already set out from Madrid ; but Orsini, who now affected the utmost joy and satisfaction at the union she had endeavoured to prevent, passed on before the king to Xadraca, leaving Philip behind, accompanied by her nephew, the prince de Chalais, and surrounded by her creatures. At Xadraca she halted, and, taking possession of the small inn of that place, gave orders for the reception of her royal mistress. The queen was some hours later than had been expected ere she arrived, and the scene that ensued between her and the princess Orsini — by every account one of the most extraordinary in history — is very differently related by different people. The best authenticated statement seems to me not the most probable, and, therefore, I shall give that in the first instance which bears upon its face the appearance of the greatest likelihood, adding the particulars from St. Simon and Duclos after.

The night was intensely cold, and the camerara mayor had just sat down to supper when the queen arrived. She rose, however, and went down to the door to meet her, but was received by Elizabeth with marked coldness. She then conducted her to the apartment prepared for her ; but still being treated with haughty indifference, her anger was roused, and she determined to assert that degree of authority which her station ge-

nerally conferred in Spain, and which she herself had exercised so long unquestioned. She accordingly commenced by making sharp remarks upon the slowness of the queen's journey, and the late hour at which she had arrived, and went on to censure her dress and appearance. Elizabeth instantly seized the opportunity. burst forth in a torrent of indignant invective, declared that she had not come to Spain to be insulted by a mad woman, and ordered up one of the officers of her escort, commanding him as soon as he appeared to take the princess, place her in a carriage, and convey her to the frontier. Orsini, we are told, resisted ; declared that the queen had no power to issue such an order, and that nothing but the express command of the king should make her stir. The officer, however, instantly produced an order in the king's own hand-writing, in which he was enjoined to obey the queen in every thing without hesitation or reserve ; and, accordingly placing the fallen favourite in a carriage, he bore her off to the frontier under a strong escort.

The principal difference between this account and the one usually received lies in the conduct of the queen ; and as to whether Orsini did, or did not, give her any provocation for the violent act she committed, the general facts are the same. The camerara mayor, according to the other statement also, arrived at Xadraca before the queen, and met her at the foot of the stairs with all due deference. She was received with apparent complacency, and led her royal mistress to her apartment ; there, however, without any cause, the queen burst forth into the most vehement reproaches, affected to consider herself insulted both by her dress and manners ; and when the princess attempted to soothe her, drowned her remonstrances and apologies in invective, and, calling to the officer of the guard, ordered him to take away that mad woman who had insulted her, at the same time pushing out Orsini with her own hands. She then ordered the commander of the escort to arrest the princess, and convey her at once to the frontier ; but

the officer hesitated, even after the queen had reminded him of the king's express injunction to obey her in every thing ; and, still filled with the remembrance of Orsini's power and authority, scrupled to obey, till the queen, calling for pen and ink, wrote an order with her own hand. The princess was then immediately arrested, placed in a carriage between two officers, and conveyed to the frontier under an escort of fifty men. The night was so severe, that the hands of the coachman were frost-bitten.

It would seem certain that she was not allowed even to change her dress, or to make any preparation for her journey ; and though, for some time, she entertained hopes that the king himself would over-rule the ill-will of his new queen, and despatch an order for her return, no such consolatory tidings reached her on the road, and she was soon in exile beyond the Spanish frontier. She lingered in the neighbourhood of Bayonne for some time, till she obtained leave to proceed to Paris ; but at the court of Louis she had made as many enemies as at the court of Philip ; and, after a temporary glimpse of favour, she was obliged once more to retire to Italy, where she closed her long and eventful career in the dwelling of a prince whose life, unlike her own checkered fate, began and ended in unceasing adversity. *

In the mean while, Elizabeth of Farnese advanced to Guadalaxara, where the marriage between herself and her husband was consummated, and she at once assumed over him all the influence which had been possessed by his former wife, and which she herself never after lost. She was now monarch of Spain ; but having, according to Spanish etiquette, dismissed at the frontier all the servants and attendants who had accompanied her from her native country, she was alone in a foreign land, deprived of every one to counsel or assist her, with whom she was in habits of communication. Thus, as she looked round the court of her husband, seeking for somebody whose knowledge of the land was greater than

* The prince usually termed the Pretender.

her own, whose experience in state affairs might afford her support and direction, whose interests were united in any degree with her own, and who might possess some recollections and some feelings in common with herself, the only one whom she beheld was Alberoni, and upon him, consequently, fixed at once her confidence and her hopes. Towards him also she might be supposed to feel herself bound by gratitude, were gratitude not a virtue, which we have no right, without cause, to suppose existing in princes.

To him, however, she was indebted for her elevation to the throne of a great monarchy; and in that transaction he had given a sufficient guarantee of his zeal and affection for his native princes, to justify her in placing full confidence in him. He was thoroughly acquainted also with the manners and customs of the Spanish people, and with the characters, dispositions, talents, and influence of all the various persons who figured at the court of Madrid. With the character even of her husband he was much better acquainted than herself, and he was deeply versed in the history of all the intrigues which had affected Europe, and principally Spain, during the twenty years preceding.

These latter advantages he had gained as secretary to Vendôme, and as agent for Parma at the court of Madrid; but besides these, he had original qualities which were not likely to escape the eyes of so keen an observer of human nature as Elizabeth Farnese. He was active, laborious, indefatigable, thoughtful, subtle, fertile in resources, cautious, if not always prudent, and extensive in his views, if not always wise in his purposes: besides all this, he was thoroughly aware of the spirit of the Spanish people; and, unlike the ministers who at that moment surrounded the throne of Philip, was willing to humour the prejudices and follies of the nation, and not to shock it by attempts at reformation, for which it was absolutely unprepared; while at the same time he was ready to employ all its good qualities, to seize upon all its advantages, and to maintain it in that state

of peace out of which the passions and prejudices of many persons at the court, headed by the king, were likely to hurry it; but which could alone enable the country to turn to account the opportunities which it had gained, and permit it to recover from a long series of misfortunes and errors, which had exhausted both the population and resources of Spain.

On Alberoni, then, fixed the eyes of the young queen, as soon as she had an opportunity of looking around her at the Spanish court. She instantly made him her confidant and adviser; brought him into nearer contact with Philip, by whom he was already liked and respected; and followed his counsels in all the changes that succeeded her marriage. The queen, however, aware of the jealousy with which the Spanish people, though so constantly governed by foreigners, regarded a foreign domination, was far too wise to force her father's envoy at once into office. Alberoni, too, whose after conduct, when fully seated in power, showed, too often for his own interests, a daring and imprudent spirit, pursued now, as he had ever hitherto done, the most cautious and unostentatious means of rising, taking step by step, with slow and quiet subtilty, offending no one by snatching at any part of their authority, and ruling first partially and then entirely, without any-body but himself and the queen dreaming that he ruled at all.

The first act of his power, for it must be attributed to him, as the young queen herself was but too little acquainted with the minute arrangements of the Spanish government to conduct such a proceeding, was to change entirely the ministry which had been appointed by the princess Orsini, and to substitute one in its stead which he could rule as he liked, which he knew would not pursue the violent measures that were likely to alienate the Spanish people from the throne, and from which he could at any time that he pleased snatch the power intrusted to them, without danger to himself or agitation to the country. During the short interregnum which the period of Philip's widowhood may be considered to have

been, Macañaz, now famous as a jurisconsult, and Orri, deservedly celebrated as a financier, had commenced the most sweeping, and, to the Spanish people, alarming reforms, advancing before the progress of the human mind by the space of at least half a century. Macañaz had boldly attacked the inquisition itself; the iniquitous, and constantly abused, privilege of sanctuary; many of the ecclesiastical exactions, and many unjust claims which the clergy considered absolute rights. Orri had joined him heart and hand in these proceedings, and had added thereunto, on his own part, the most strenuous efforts for fiscal reform. He had swept away at once hosts of collectors and petty farmers of the revenue; and he had endeavoured to simplify the whole organisation of the finances in such a manner as to remove a complete army of custom-house officers and excisemen, whose principal emoluments were derived from a licence to prey upon the people, and who, again, owed their nomination to a multitude of higher officers and nobles, who conceived it a part of their privileges to have the appointment of two or three hundred of these fiscal harpies.

All these measures had rendered Orri, Macañaz, and Robinet, the king's confessor, odious, not only to the people of Spain, but to the bigotted and intolerant catholics of all countries. Their principal enemy, however, had been the cardinal del Giudice, who, while absent in Paris, in a state of honourable exile from the court of Madrid, had been suspended from the functions of grand inquisitor, and enjoined to resign that office. Immediately, however, that the principal direction of affairs fell secretly into the hands of Alberoni, the cardinal del Giudice was recalled to the government, and appointed minister for foreign affairs, as well as governor of the prince of the Asturias.

The place of the confessor Robinet was supplied by the former confessor, Daubenton; and the confessor to the queen, selected by Alberoni himself, was Dominico di Guerra, an Italian of mean intellect and

servile disposition, who was likely, from every circumstance, to act entirely as the tool of the Parmesan envoy. Macañaz had already taken refuge in France. Although Philip had supported him as long as the princess Orsini remained in favour, he easily perceived that her fall would not be long unfollowed by an attack of the inquisition upon himself, and sought security in another country. Orri received an intimation to quit Madrid in twenty-four hours, and willingly obeyed it; and the cardinal del Giudice, uniting in his person three of the most important offices under the Spanish crown, assumed the functions of prime minister; while Alberoni and the queen held the reins of government over his shoulder, and, without his knowing it, guided the vehicle of the state in what direction they pleased.

In the mean time, the aspiring Italian had to consider what was that scheme of government which he ought to pursue, in order to secure the permanence, and increase the vigour, of his own authority; and the great difficulty which he foresaw was to reconcile his own interests—which to all ambitious men form the first object—with the welfare of the country he was called to govern—which to all wise ministers appears the surest means of permanent success. But in his instance he had not to depend for support upon any abstract principles of wisdom or virtue, nor even upon the absolute result of the schemes which he undertook. The passions and the designs, the interests and the wishes, of the two persons on whose favour his influence was founded, were of necessity to him the stars by which he had to steer his course, if he wished that influence to endure.

It so happened, that the desires of the king naturally coincided with the ambitious views of the queen. The restoration of the Spanish domination in Italy was one of the brightest day-dreams of Philip; and the assertion of her claims upon Parma and Tuscany, and the final acquisition of those territories, was the great aspiration of Elizabeth of Farnese. Spain, however, absolutely required repose; and the great difficulty of Alberoni was to

restrain the eager passions of his patrons till such a period as the country should have recovered from long and desolating wars, and its vast natural resources should have supplied the deficiencies actually existing, and afforded a surplus for the accomplishment of his great design. "Give me but five years of peace, sire," he said to the king, "and I will make you the greatest monarch that ever lived." To the queen he represented that the time for asserting her rights by force of arms was not yet come.

Alberoni had not resided so long at the court of Spain without discovering that the indolent and fatigued imagination of Philip was only to be excited by the stimulus of gorgeous and magnificent promises. Upon this discovery he fixed his system of dealing with the monarch; from this discovery he regulated his whole conversation with Philip. It afforded him the means of ruling the king when brought immediately in contact with him, and it probably generated in his own mind that habit of loose but brilliant speculation, which led him into designs unwarranted by circumstances, vague plans beyond his powers to accomplish, and endeavours, the disappointment of which was far more disgraceful than their success could have been honourable to their promulgator. At first, however, his policy was prudent and cautious; and while he evinced sufficient boldness in counselling the assertion of the king's undoubted rights, he took every pains to avoid any step, the consequences of which might plunge him in the inevitable disasters of warfare.

The domination of the princess Orsini had been the first barrier to the ambitious views of Alberoni; but that had been completely overthrown without any exertions on his part. As long as the life of Louis XIV. endured, however, another check existed upon the queen's government; but on the first of September, 1715, that celebrated monarch left the world in which he had played so striking a part; and the thralldom which his influence had naturally cast over the mind and actions of Philip

was for ever removed. The rights of succession to the French throne the Spanish monarch had renounced ; but his renunciation in the eyes of catholic morality might speedily be rendered invalid, and as such he already considered it.

Of the title which his birth gave him to the regency of the kingdom, however, he had made no renunciation ; and his ambition and his vanity were both offended, when the will of Louis XIV., appointing the duke of Orleans to the French regency, was made known. But when the duke of Orleans, following precisely the track of all his predecessors in that office, caused the restrictive provisions of the late king's will to be annulled by the parliament, and assumed at once the absolute dominion of France, Philip of Spain, it is said, entertained the purpose of marching at once upon Paris, in order to assert his rights to the regency ; and it was only by the persuasions of Alberoni that he was induced to desist from a scheme, the success of which was more than doubtful, and the failure of which would have been utterly ruinous.

He himself takes great credit for thus diverting, for a time, the probability of a new war ; but nevertheless, about the same period, he was negotiating skilfully with the two great maritime powers ; and an arrangement of the differences between them and Spain was only delayed by the hesitating uncertainty of the puppets whom he had placed in the ministry, and who gave themselves airs of importance, by cavilling at the terms and language of the treaties which he was most anxious to cement between Holland, England, and Spain. At that moment, wronged as Philip conceived himself to be by the emperor, and panting to wrest from the house of Austria the Spanish dominions in Italy ; indignant at the assumption of power by the duke of Orleans, and determined to assert his claim to the throne of France, in event of the death of Louis XV., the natural allies of Philip were those with whom he had lately been at war ; and, with most skilful policy, Alberoni determined

upon gaining the British ministry to the interests of his master, by any concessions which Spain could make. The ulterior object of such policy was, undoubtedly, to prosecute, unmolested, the war in Italy, and to assert, unopposed, the latent claim of Philip to the throne of France ; but there is every reason to believe that Alberoni looked for, and desired most ardently, a considerable interval of peace, to enable him to gather together all the scattered resources of Spain, in order to render the contest successful.

Although Orri had been, as we have seen, dismissed in disgrace, Alberoni was too wise not to benefit by the judicious measures which he had pursued ; and while the expelled minister bore the odium of all the regulations which he had introduced into the financial system of Spain, Alberoni adhered to his plan, and reaped the benefits thereof. The abrogation of the peculiar privileges of Arragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, also strengthened the hands of the Spanish government, and promised new resources, so that the ambitious Italian calculated upon entering into power with increased means, and brilliant enterprises before him. In the mean time it was necessary to secure England and Holland, as allies of Spain, in order to prevent any coalition detrimental to the future objects of the Spanish monarch ; and, of course, some benefits and advantages were to be held out to those commercial countries, which might be the price of their amity.

It happened, however, that in the relations of the states of Europe, but more especially between Spain and England, various circumstances existed, which enabled the former country to gratify the latter without any great detriment to herself, and without exciting the jealousy of other nations. In the various arrangements consequent upon the treaty of Utrecht, the commercial advantages with Spain, which England had hoped to gain, had been completely annulled by a number of explanatory articles, as they were called, which had been added to the treaty of peace. The English merchants in the ports of Spain were subject

to the greatest difficulties and annoyances, and instead of being treated as a favoured commercial power, England found obstructions at every step. To remove these obstructions had been the great object of the English ministers ever since they had arisen ; but no progress whatsoever had been made in any negotiations to that effect till the death of Louis XIV. Scarcely was the news of that event, and of the proceedings of the duke of Orleans, known in Madrid, than Alberoni, persuading Philip not to march upon Paris as he at first designed, held out to him the prospect of obtaining all his objects by the milder means of an alliance with England and Holland, and opened a communication with Mr. Doddington, then British envoy at the Spanish court.

This transaction, curious in every respect, is the more so, as it is the first in which Alberoni appears acting on behalf of the king of Spain. He was yet, however, without any other political character than envoy from Parma ; and in the first steps of the negotiation, Bubb Doddington seems to have been unaware with whom he was treating. The first communication between them took place through the intervention of the Dutch minister, baron Ripperda, whom Alberoni had lately courted with much assiduity, paying him the flattering compliment of consulting him upon various points of policy, and adopting the scheme of political economy, which the genius of Ripperda had drawn up as the most beneficial for Spain. Ripperda, in his first interview with the British minister, withheld the name of Alberoni, mentioning him merely as a gentleman of great consequence, who had received full powers from the king to negotiate with Holland and England. It was some days before Mr. Doddington learned who this gentleman was ; but when he did so, he described him to lord Stanhope, as " one who alone is absolute here, who has gained an entire ascendant of the queen, and consequently over the king."

With Alberoni himself, the British ambassador soon after had several personal interviews, and the negotiation proceeded rapidly towards its conclusion, though

there were peculiar circumstances in the situation of the ruler of the Spanish councils, which seemed to throw great difficulties in the way of that statesman, especially regarding the transactions in question. These circumstances, however, produced more apparent than real difficulties; and were likely to prove so beneficial, and to afford such safeguards in case of disappointment in his views upon England, that Alberoni would, on no account, have removed them at that period. They originated in the fact of all the members of the ostensible government of Spain at that time being bigotted adherents of the old Bourbon party, which was fanatically vehement against England and Holland, and therefore disposed to oppose every measure in favour of either of those nations. But the benefits which Alberoni derived from suffering such a state of things to endure were manifold. In the first place, any gratitude which might be felt upon the part of England would attach solely to himself, and be increased by the apparent difficulties that he had to contend with in promoting the interests of that crown. In the next place, should England show herself indisposed to act cordially with Spain for her interests also, he had an opportunity of delaying the execution of whatever favours he promised, and of attributing that delay to the administration, which was so much opposed to the whole proceeding.

The promises, however, given on the part of England by Mr. Doddington, appeared so conclusive and satisfactory, that Alberoni himself, subtle and clear-sighted but impetuous as he was, permitted himself to be deceived in regard to the views of that power. The imputation, however, upon his political sagacity is less grave than that upon the sincerity and honour of the English ministry; for the correspondence which took place, both between the British envoy and his own court, the assurances which he was ordered to give to Alberoni, and the very letter of Stanhope to that statesman himself*, must have led any one, who had

* December, 1715.

the slightest confidence in the honour and honesty of princes and ministers, to believe that the good will and friendly feelings of England were perfectly gained to Spain, and that no measure would be taken by the former power which could be injurious to the latter.

The great fault of the Spanish government, and the weak point in its policy, was one which Alberoni might, perhaps, have removed, but for which he can scarcely be looked upon as answerable: that weak point was the incompetence and want of sagacity of her ambassadors at foreign courts. That which was managed at Madrid was managed with skill, prudence, and circumspection, and tended to one great political purpose. But while such persons as Monteleone represented the king of Spain in the court of London, or Cellamare at Paris, the proceedings of foreign powers, their views, purposes, and situations, could never be made known to the cabinet of Madrid with sufficient rapidity, accuracy, and sagacity, to enable it to act with caution and wisdom. While treating with England, in regard to commercial advantages to be granted to that power, we find that Alberoni was left utterly ignorant of her proceedings with foreign and inimical courts; and from the aid which the regent duke of Orleans afforded to the son of James II., in his attempt upon England, in 1715 — aid and protection which, though secret, was never withdrawn till that attempt had utterly failed — he might naturally believe that the king of Great Britain would not be inclined to enter into any very strict alliance with a prince who had shown himself so hostile to the reigning dynasty in England.

At the very time, however, that Alberoni was obtaining for British commerce a treaty the most advantageous that could be required, and was insinuating with great hopes of success, through the British envoy at Madrid, what the king of Spain desired as a compensation, the English government was treating with the enemies of Spain. The compensation desired was, that the king of Great Britain, who was already bound to maintain the exact

state of things in Italy, should interpose to put a stop to the encroachments of the emperor in that country, and for that purpose should send a few vessels to join the Spanish fleet in the Mediterranean ; and also that the king of England should guarantee to the heirs of the queen of Spain the security of her reversionary right to Parma and Tuscany. But, as I have said, at the very time that such proposals were made by Mr. Doddington to Stanhope, with great hopes of success, the British ministry were carrying on in secret treaties with Holland and Germany, and negotiating with France.

Nor was this all : the very nature and stipulations of those treaties were directly at variance with the covenants under which Great Britain lay to Spain. In February and May of 1716, treaties were concluded between England and Holland, and England and the empire, destructive to the views and interests of Philip ; and at the very moment that Mr. Doddington was instructed to demand that the king of Spain should renounce formally all connection with the unfortunate prince called the Pretender, which was readily obtained from Alberoni, a treaty was entered into with the emperor, for mutual defence, but in which was inserted an article referring evidently to the Austrian designs upon Italy, guaranteeing to each of the contracting parties *whatever acquisitions they should make by mutual consent*. If the ensuing month other articles were agreed upon between France and England, by which the successions of the two crowns, as at that time established, was guaranteed reciprocally, and the hopes of Philip, both in regard to his ultimate claims upon France, and his rights in Italy, were defeated by the very power to which he was making every concession, and which was giving him the most lively promises of amity and co-operation.

That the emperor was determined to gain all that he could in Italy was clearly proved by his forcible occupation of Novi ; and while Alberoni offered the state or Genoa immediate aid to guard it against farther aggression, he appealed indignantly to the king of England,

as guarantee of the state of Italy. But the British ministers temporised, and evaded the question, while they hurried their negotiations with the emperor; and the famous alliance was concluded in the end of the year, between England, France, and Holland, holding out to Austria, at the same time, as an inducement to join the confederation, the prospect of obtaining Sicily in exchange for Sardinia, contrary to the existing treaty with Philip, the rights of Spain, and the faith of nations. Such is a brief sketch of a transaction which was a worthy consummation of the inglorious peace of Utrecht, and of the base and cowardly abandonment of the brave people of Catalonia, by those who had roused them into arms, and profited by their valour.

Before proceeding to trace the general consequences which these transactions produced, we will pause upon the measures which Alberoni was pursuing, for the purpose of hurrying his own advancement, and of obtaining that high clerical dignity to which he aspired both as a step to political power, and as a safeguard against the dangers attending it. He had set his mind upon the Roman purple, which would cover the baseness of his origin from the eyes of even the haughty grandees of Spain; would give him claim to precedence and authority; would enable him openly to exercise that power which he at present secretly possessed; and would shelter him from the storm, if adversity should ever fall upon him. For this object he employed all his efforts, from the moment the arrival of Elizabeth Farnese in Spain and the favour with which she regarded him afforded him the prospect of acquiring the government of that country. The king and the queen united in pressing upon the pope the merits of their favourite, and in demanding for him the hat of a cardinal.

Alberoni himself, too, endeavoured by all means to signalise his devotion to the court of Rome; and though, on the threatening aspect of the Turks in the Mediterranean and their descents on the coast of the Adriatic, he suffered the cardinal del Giudice to refuse to the pope the

aid of a Spanish fleet, no sooner was the application made to him in person than it was granted, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the council. By his intervention, also, the disputes between the courts of Spain and Rome, regarding the nunciature, were settled in a manner gratifying to the pontiff; and many other points of minor interest, but still affecting the honour and authority of the holy see, were by his means speedily arranged.

He had many obstacles to contend with, however, of a nature very difficult to be overcome. Though men, perhaps, of as low an origin as himself, had been admitted into the conclave, in almost all instances, the facts in regard to their birth were sufficiently obscure to afford an opportunity of assuming pretensions to more elevated extraction. With Alberoni, on the contrary, the whole facts of his early life were well known, nor had the dignity of his manners, nor the importance of the offices he had hitherto held, obliterated from the minds of men his original station. To every member of the college of cardinals he was still Alberoni, the gardener's boy; and great opposition was made in the conclave to the very thought of admitting him amongst its members.

Such was the state in which his private affairs stood, when the news was communicated by Monteleone to the court of Madrid, that a treaty of alliance had been signed between France, England, and Holland *, with a reservation in favour of the empire, the most detrimental that it was possible to conceive to the views and interests of Spain. That no rumour of such a treaty should have ever so far transpired, as to reach the Spanish envoys in Paris, London, or the Hague, at an earlier period, is undoubtedly most extraordinary, and implies the utmost negligence on their part, or the utmost skill and caution on the part of the negoti-

* This must not be confounded with the famous alliance concluded by Dubois in the following year, which was made known to the Spanish court step by step. See, for the above, Coxe's extracts from the Melcombe papers.

ators. Certain it is, however, that not the slightest suspicion of such a transaction reached Madrid till the end of April, or the beginning of May, when the treaties were on the very point of signature ; and the initiatory treaty with the emperor must have been signed before any remonstrance, on the part of Alberoni, could reach the place of conference.

He did not fail, however, not only to remonstrate and to threaten, but to show the English government that it had not so entirely attained its object in Spain as to justify it in throwing off the mask. His situation, indeed, was one of extreme difficulty. Philip burst forth into vehement reproaches against him, for having led him into treating, with extraordinary favour, a nation which so speedily and, so basely deceived him ; and from Great Britain, Alberoni's utmost remonstrances and accusations could gain nothing farther, than repeated declarations, that the treaty with the emperor was merely defensive. Under these circumstances, he at once suspended the execution of the late commercial treaty with England : he added fresh imposts upon all English goods entering Spanish ports : English merchants residing in towns in Spain were burdened with taxes from which they had been formerly exempt ; and while he thus worked upon the fears and interests of the English people, he screened himself from the accusations of the British government, by attributing the acts of which they complained to the ostensible ministry of Spain, and by declaring that he had lost much of his credit and influence by the conduct of England towards the emperor and the regent of France.

He still strove to pacify Philip by every effort in his power, and to detach Great Britain from its alliance with that monarch's enemies ; but it was in vain that he did so : for day by day increased the irritation of the king of Spain against his old enemy, the emperor, and neither redress, concession, or apology, was to be obtained from England. All that he could do, therefore, was to protract the time as much as possible,

in order to gather together all the resources of the country, and direct them to the best effect.

His efforts for this purpose may be as well noticed here, though they were spread over the whole period of his administration, inasmuch as it was for the purpose of meeting the war, or of supporting it, that they were principally undertaken. Those efforts were not, indeed, near so remarkable as those made by many other statesmen to relieve their country from the burdens under which it suffered, and remove the evils which occasioned them ; but Alberoni was peculiarly circumstanced, first, as a foreigner in a land with whose resources he could not be so well acquainted as a native ; next, as the ruler of a nation more tenacious of its customs and prejudices than any other people upon earth ; and, lastly, as the administrator of the finances of a country whose depression proceeded not alone from want of money or of produce, but from the want of habits of industry, the want of population, and the want of arts—whose depression originated not in temporary or local causes, but in causes which had been acting for centuries, in national character, and in geographical composition.

In order to renew a spirit of industry amongst the people, one of whose chief productions was a rich and valuable wool, Alberoni introduced the art of weaving cloth from Holland, and brought over a number of workmen at once to instruct and excite the emulation of the people. He laid a plan for opening the ports of Spain for the American trade, which had hitherto been confined to Cadiz ; and he formed one of the grandest designs which was ever entertained by a Spanish minister, for recovering the trade with China and the East Indies, by Acapulco and the Philippine Islands. To facilitate this scheme, he caused the coast of California to be accurately surveyed for the purpose of establishing a port between Europe and the East ; and he encouraged, both with money and grants, the settlement of jesuits and other adventurers upon the American coast, in order to people the tract, which he thus proposed as an inter-

mediate position between the two continents, and to ascertain all the advantages and productions of that large, but hitherto unprofitable, district. With none of these bright projects was he permitted to advance very far ; but, at the same time, his regulations in regard to port duties, his prevention of the fraudulent compositions entered into between merchants and local custom-houses ; his new system of farming the taxes, and his abolition of all assignments on the provincial revenues, produced a very vast increase of income, and rendered the resources that did exist far more available.

In the mean while, events were hurrying Alberoni forward to that point where war became no longer avoidable. The encroachments of the emperor in Italy, though not very great, were quite sufficient to show the spirit in which he acted ; and it was evident, that the countenance of England would be afforded to whatever that monarch chose to undertake against Spain. Under such circumstances, peace could not, of course, be long protracted ; but the actual cause of hostilities was destined to be the wrong offered to an individual, and not any important aggression of one state upon another. The Spanish envoy at the court of Rome, don Joseph Molinez, had always shown himself, it would appear, strongly inimical to the house of Austria ; and, by a haughty and overbearing spirit, had even injured the credit of his sovereign at the Roman court. He was, we are assured, neither a very brilliant nor a very amiable person ; and was not either very much liked nor esteemed by Alberoni, or Philip himself. Yet upon his account broke out the first war after that of the succession between Spain and Austria. As the share which Alberoni had in that transaction is the most difficult, and perhaps the most important point in his history ; as it was on that account that he was censured by England and France, and in consequence thereof, that he fell into disgrace with his own court, and was forced to know once more the scourge of keen adversity, we will pause for a moment, to examine minutely all the points re-

garding the commencement of that war, with the purpose of ascertaining, if it be possible, in what degree it was really promoted by Alberoni.

Notwithstanding the deceitful conduct of the English government, Alberoni laboured hard to detach the king of England from the enemies of Spain; and while meeting duplicity by duplicity, he delayed the execution of the commercial treaty as long as possible, he laid, as we have shown, the whole blame of that delay upon the French party composing the ministry, with the cardinal del Giudice at its head. In consequence of these representations, the British envoy laboured hard to induce Alberoni to complete the defeat of that body, and assume at once the post of minister; and he not only promised all the support of the British crown to the aspiring Italian in his efforts to that effect, but in a private audience of Philip, he spoke in a manner concerning the internal arrangements of Spain, and the confidence of Great Britain in Alberoni, which no foreign plenipotentiary would have ventured to employ towards any but a very weak sovereign. Still Alberoni hesitated even to dismiss the ministers who acted as a screen to his own proceedings, and much less did he feel inclined to assume an office which he felt to be dangerous, without some safeguard.

Nevertheless he did not scruple, however, to overwhelm Del Giudice with slights and mortifications, which would have compelled any other man to abandon an office, the functions of which he was not permitted to discharge. The negotiation of the commercial treaty without his knowledge, and against his consent, began these proceedings; the first assistance granted to the pope followed; and then, as Alberoni found that war would be ultimately inevitable, a second auxiliary force, amounting to 8000 men, was despatched to the Mediterranean, against the opinion of the minister, which enabled the republic of Venice to maintain the Ionian Islands against the Turks, and afforded Alberoni an excuse for carrying on his military preparations on a

much larger scale than was needed for the ostensible object.

A more severe mortification followed. In order to meet the measures of his adversaries, the cardinal del Giudice induced the king to name a junta selected from all the other councils, to take cognisance of some disputes with France; and gradually he caused all foreign affairs to be referred to it, which now assumed the title of *Junta de Dependencias Extrangeras*. By this means he threw many impediments in the way of the various negotiations then going on; but, to counteract this attempt, Alberoni obtained an order from the king, forbidding all Spanish ministers at foreign courts to correspond with their own, through the ordinary channel called *Via de Estado*, but to transmit their despatches directly to the king by what was termed the *Reservada*; in consequence of which, the ministers were ignorant of all that passed, till such time as the king, or rather Alberoni, thought fit to communicate it to them. All these slights were borne by the cardinal with exemplary patience, although Mr. Doddington declares in one of his letters given by Mr. Coxe, that "we were in hopes such mortifying usage would have prevailed upon him to ask leave to retire."

At length, the pertinacity of the nominal minister became inconvenient; the prospect of soon obtaining the purple enabled Alberoni to act with vigour; the queen was persuaded that the cardinal, as governor of the prince of the Asturias, prepossessed her husband's son against herself and her children; the king's confessor was employed to work upon the monarch's mind; and on the 17th of July, 1716, Del Giudice was commanded to resign all his posts except his place in the council, and the office of grand inquisitor. The latter, however, he demanded permission to lay down next day; but, as the pope's sanction was required to that step, he remained for some time longer in Madrid. The post of governor to the prince of the Asturias was given to the duke of Popoli, a man of some talent, but

of somewhat too courtly a facility ; and, as soon as the sanction of the pope was obtained for the appointment of a new inquisitor general, don Joseph Molinez, the Spanish ambassador at Rome, was nominated to that high office.

In the mean while, the whole affairs of Spain fell into the hands of Alberoni ; but he still declined appearing in the responsible situation of prime minister, leaving the ostensible business of the state to be transacted by the king and the secretary Grimaldo, while he moved all the secret wheels of government. This conduct, however, now proved in some degree inconvenient, and in some degree dangerous. The foreign ambassadors at Madrid were now without any one to whom they could properly address themselves ; and Alberoni's power was also exposed to attacks from which he would have been shielded, had he assumed the title of minister. The most important of these, was one directed against him by the duke of Orleans, who, seeing the rising authority of the wily Italian, and his leaning towards the views of England, despatched to Madrid, Louville, the former friend and favourite of Philip, who, he now thought, might shake the foundation of Alberoni's credit, and restore the ascendancy of Bourbon councils in the court of Spain.

Alberoni was upon his guard, however ; a regular ambassador from France then resided at Madrid ; the pretences for Louville's mission were too shallow not to be fathomed in a moment ; and he had scarcely entered the capital, when he received notice to quit that city instantly, accompanied by many expressions of surprise on the part of Grimaldo, the king's secretary, at his having dared to set his foot in a country, and present himself at a court from which he had been banished not many years before. While considering what step to take, and doubting not in the least that the treatment he received was instigated by Alberoni, Louville was astonished by seeing that statesman appear. With consummate duplicity, Alberoni endeavoured to persuade the regent's

envoy extraordinary, that he was mortified and disappointed at the conduct of the king. He would fain have induced him to believe, that he, Alberoni, was utterly incapable of changing the monarch's determination, and that the influence that people attributed to him was quite imaginary. He entered upon the subject at length, and induced Louville, one of the shallowest of men, to show his full powers; and though probably the envoy was not so foolish as to explain to the Italian the real object of his mission, yet there can be no doubt that Alberoni succeeded in the object for which he visited him, and extracted confirmation of his preconceived suspicions in regard to the real designs of the French court.

Louville, we are told, threatened as well as remonstrated; and demanded solemnly, in the name of the prince he represented, an audience of the monarch to whose court he was sent. It was all in vain, however, that he did so; for though suffered to remain some weeks in Madrid, he was never allowed to hold any communication with the court: and such representations were sent to France as immediately produced his recall.

In the mean time, great confusion existed at the court of Spain, in consequence of the want of an ostensible minister; and while the pressing solicitations of the king and the queen urged the slow pontiff and the unwilling conclave to raise Alberoni to the purple, that statesman filled up various vacancies, in various ministerial departments, with a new puppet administration, which all men perceived to be but a temporary expedient. The marquis of Tolosa, a mere creature of Alberoni's, was the only one likely to remain; and on him was bestowed the appointment of secretary at war, a department which Alberoni saw the absolute necessity of having under his own command.

Thus stood affairs at the commencement of 1717; and at that very time military preparations to a very considerable extent were going on in the ports of Spain: this is a feature in the case that must not be forgotten.

It is true, that the menacing attitude which Spain assumed, might only be put on to give vigour to those negotiations which she was carrying on at the time with the various powers of Europe: it is true, that those preparations might also be destined, as was studiously given out by the Spanish ministry, to aid the pope and the Venetians in their resistance to the Turks. But against this latter assertion, it has been remarked with justice, that the only troops which could be employed in opposition to the Mahomedan efforts in the Mediterranean must have consisted of infantry; whereas many of the transports collected at Barcelona were fitted up expressly for the conveyance of cavalry. Against the former idea also, viz. that these preparations were a mere demonstration of strength, and that the forces collected were not intended to be employed at all, or, at least, not soon, it has been proved, that don Joseph Patiño, the confidential agent of Alberoni, visited Barcelona early in the spring of 1717, for the purpose of hurrying on all the military arrangements making in that port as vigorously as possible.

These preparations were not without effect upon the public mind of Europe. The anticipation of a new war was any thing but grateful to any of the parties in the triple alliance. Landi, the Spanish ambassador at the Hague, induced the Dutch to retard, as far as possible, the proceedings of France and England; and even when obliged to co-operate with those powers, the United Provinces would only consent to a mediation between Spain and the empire. Stanhope, who was then at the Hague, entered into conferences with Landi, for the purpose of bringing about such an accommodation; but the offers which England made were so obviously partial, that they could be received as little else than insulting by the court of Spain. The principal feature of those offers was the guarantee to the children of the queen of their reversionary claim to Parma and Tuscany; but, at the same time, it was hinted, that if the emperor promised to recognise thos

rights, it would be expected that Spain should make no opposition to his receiving Sicily in exchange for Sardinia.

In consequence of this communication, an interview took place between Alberoni and Mr. Doddington, in which the former gave a very fair and clear exposition of his master's situation, in reference to that proposal. The offers of England, he said, were not sufficient to restore the balance of power in Italy ; but a vague and contingent advantage was held out to Spain, while real and immediate advantages were conferred upon the emperor. He might, at any time, find a pretext for revoking his promise ; and, in the mean time, his power of breaking it with impunity would be greatly increased. If, indeed, added Alberoni, the king of Spain might be permitted to secure his contingent rights in Parma and Tuscany, by putting garrisons in the strong places of those states, the matter might be worthy of consideration ; but if he were to depend entirely upon verbal promises, he would rather a great deal remain as he was, and find occasion to make good his pretensions in Italy, as time might serve.

Various other conferences took place upon these matters ; and Alberoni laboured assiduously to make England believe that she was upon the point of enjoying the commercial advantages which Spain had promised her. At the same time, however, he endeavoured to obtain permission to raise a force of 3000 Irish, seeing that great discontent was springing up amongst the people, and that he might not find Spanish troops very ready to repress any movement in opposition to the approaching war. This permission, however, was refused ; and, notwithstanding all the activity and energy of Alberoni's character, he found the very greatest difficulty in carrying on his warlike preparations in such a manner as to meet the necessities of the case.

Under these circumstances, he was most anxious to delay the resumption of hostilities in Italy as long as possible. We have every reason to believe, that he laboured

both with Philip and the queen to overcome that monarch's anxiety for war ; and what might have been the consequences it would be impossible to tell, had not an event occurred, which, by stimulating all the passions of Philip against his early rival and enemy, hurried on the catastrophe which Alberoni was anxious to delay. The cardinal del Giudice having quitted Spain and returned to Rome, and Molinez, the Spanish ambassador, at the holy see, having been appointed grand inquisitor in his stead, the latter set out for Madrid to take possession of his new office. Before doing so, however, he visited the court of Parma upon business which has not transpired ; and then, furnished with a regular passport from the pope, and a promise of free passage from the governor of the Milanese, he began his journey towards Spain.

As we have already shown, he had proved himself on several occasions inimical to the house of Austria ; and the preparations of Spain having excited the apprehensions of that power, it was supposed that the papers of Molinez, after his secret interview with the duke of Parma, might develope the views of the court of Madrid in regard to its pretensions upon Italy. Such then being the case, no sooner had Molinez entered the territory of the Milanese, than he was arrested by order of the governor of that territory, and conveyed to the castle of Milan. That this was a gross and infamous violation of international law, there can be no doubt ; but, at the same time, it is probable that wise and temperate remonstrance might have obtained adequate satisfaction without the necessity of warfare, and that the bias of indifferent powers would have been thereby rendered unfavourable to the offender.

The very first intimation which Philip received of the insult thus offered to his crown, was couched in such terms as to irritate him in the highest degree. The tidings were conveyed to him by the marquis of St. Philippe, Spanish envoy to the state of Genoa, and afterwards historian of the events in which he now

mingled. Not content with simply stating the fact that the inquisitor general had been arrested in his passage through the Milanese, he added, if we may believe his own memoirs, every thing that could aggravate the insult and irritate the mind of the king. He pointed out that this act of the Austrian government was a new infringement of the neutrality of Italy; and he owns that he endeavoured to stir up the monarch to seek vengeance for the affront offered to him. Philip was already but too well inclined to follow the course pointed out; and the moment the tidings arrived, he determined, with a strength of resolution which resisted all remonstrance, to vindicate the honour of Spain, insulted in the person of one of her ministers.

The part which Alberoni now acted has been made the subject of very sharp discussion. That he used every argument to dissuade the king from war, there can be no doubt; that he addressed the same reasoning to the queen is equally certain, employing such strong persuasions, in order to induce her to join her voice to his, as often to draw tears into her eyes, from agitation, at the struggle between anxiety for her husband's honour and dignity, and for the safety and welfare of his dominion. The only question is, whether the remonstrances of Alberoni were sincere. One party has asserted, that through the whole of this transaction that minister was perfectly insincere; and they bring forward his warlike preparations, his rejection of the pacificatory proposals of England, Holland, and France, and a number of minor particulars, all tending to show that he was disposed to urge an immediate war with the empire.

This party then declares, that the whole of his pacific persuasions, his remonstrances to the king, his letter to the duke of Popoli, which we shall soon notice, and his reference of the matter to the council of state, was a pure political farce; a piece of gross duplicity to screen himself from the responsibility of the bold and dangerous step upon which he was just about

to enter. The other party contend that he was sincere; that he was guided by wisdom and good policy; and they refer to the unanswerable arguments which he produced against the proposed retaliation of Philip, as the strongest proof that he expressed nothing but his real feelings, and maintained them as a good politician and an honest man.

Although I do not rate the character of Alberoni very high, I cannot but coincide in this opinion.* But before proceeding any farther, it may be necessary to enforce strongly a distinction which has not been sufficiently made, and to point out that Alberoni, through the whole transaction, did not oppose the necessity of war with the empire, but only the policy of war at that moment. With uniform consistency, he declared the intention and purpose of the king of Spain to be the future assertion of his rights in Italy by force of arms: all that he combatted in the present instance was, that the time was come for so asserting those rights. This will be perceived through the whole of the correspondence between Doddington, Stanhope, and Methuin, Alberoni's observations addressed to the duke of Popoli, and his apology itself.

On the next step of the proceedings, two different statements appear as to a simple fact. The king, weary of the opposition of Alberoni, wrote to the duke of Popoli, now governor of the prince of the Asturias, for his opinion — an opinion which, from his rank, talents, and influence, was of much weight; but by some, Alberoni is declared to have advised the king to take this step; while by others, it is said to have been the spontaneous act of Philip. That monarch, however, suffered his wish for a warlike reply so plainly to appear, that the duke immediately answered as the king desired. He not only stated that he believed war to be necessary, but he declared, that, in his opinion, Spain was capable of supporting that war. He pointed out various resources; he called into view all

the advantages of her situation ; he concealed, or obscured, all the dangers, difficulties, and obstacles.

The king, gratified and elated, sent the letter to Alberoni, who, astonished at the reply, and terrified at the effects it was likely to produce, immediately made use of the same means to strengthen his own opinion, which the king had taken to strengthen his ; and wrote to the duke of Popoli a letter, the authenticity of which is undoubted, and the terms of which are sufficiently clear to leave no suspicion, at least upon my mind, as to the sincerity of the writer. He, in the first place, expresses his astonishment at the opinion expressed by the duke, and declares that an immediate war must produce the utter ruin of Spain.

He then proceeds to argue upon the policy of such a measure ; granting that the arrest of Molinez was a breach of the existing arrangements between Spain and the empire, with regard to Italy ; and he asks *, “ With what force, with what measure, can the catholic king attempt to invade the kingdom of Naples ? For even granting that there are two millions of dollars in the treasury, that we have another fleet, transports, ammunition, artillery ; granting that it reaches Naples, that the whole country declares in favour of the king ; that the fortresses surrender, who is the person that can answer for the maintenance of the conquest ? All the requisites for such a conquest, however, are by no means prepared. Let the duke of Popoli state how much time is necessary to collect them. Is your excellency ignorant, then, that two months would be required for an expedition to Majorca ? So long a time then being necessary for such preparations, the squadron destined for the enterprise against the emperor must be left in the port of Cadiz, or Barcelona, to rot, in the mean time, in inactivity, to our shame, and scandal in the eyes of the world.”

“ Consider, my lord duke,” he proceeds, “ that be-

* Appendix to the Life of Alberoni, by G. Moore, Esq., and Cox's Bourbon Kings of Spain.

fore the declaration of war against the Turks, the archduke obtained, through the pope, the assurance that the king of Spain would not attack his Italian dominions. Can the king consider the arrest of Molinez as an infraction of the neutrality, and, consequently, as a motive to recall his promise? My lord duke, according to the guarantee of the maritime powers and France no hostilities were to take place in Italy, nor any change in the existing possessions. Now reprisals, whether they happen or not, cannot be regarded as acts of hostilities between two powers already at enmity. Supposing, then, that our troops effect a landing, and take possession of the kingdom, this very success will be desirable to the Germans, because it will furnish them with a reason to carry into execution those vast designs which might be opposed, should they be attempted without a motive.

“Doubtless, then, on the first intelligence of the invasion, the court of Vienna will hasten a peace with the Turks, or, suddenly providing for defence, will be able to despatch a detachment of 18,000 men into Italy, and instantly occupy the states of Parma, Placentia, and Tuscany. Supposing, however, a successful debarkation and peaceable occupation of the kingdom, it will be still necessary to keep the fleet at Naples, and all the vessels ready for transport, otherwise the king might be unable to withdraw his troops.

“What will the Dutch say, to see such an attempt at the time when they appear willing to form a league with Spain, and reconcile the king with the archduke? What will France say, who offers to induce the maritime powers to secure for don Carlos the states of Parma, Placentia, and Tuscany? What will England say, who knows and promotes such arrangements? Oh, my lord duke, these are wild ideas, thus to involve two young and innocent sovereigns in the utmost distress! In a word, this is leading the world to imagine that a few mad Italians, from attachment to their native country, have urged the king to the extermination and ruin of Spain.

“Without allies, the catholic king cannot hope to conquer Italy, particularly at a time when he has neither troops, nor money, nor able commanders. With three kingdoms * more disaffected than ever, with a people enraged, with a nobility discontented ; finally, deprived of all human help ; in this state we are not able, according to your excellency’s phrase, to oppose force by force. Lastly, in such an important affair, I want the courage of your excellency to say, or think, that, notwithstanding so many difficulties, we should throw ourselves into the hands of Providence, and trust to the justness of our cause. This I declared to their majesties on the first word with which they honoured me on the subject ; and I should be most gratified, even were the enterprise attended with the most happy result, that the world should know my weak judgment did not approve of it. I request your excellency to receive these, my crude sentiments, written in haste, to peruse and return them ; observing this religious secret, confided to your honour and probity, with the protest, *salvo seniori judicio*.” †

Such was the reasoning used by Alberoni, in a letter which he had every reason to believe would find its way to the hands of the king ; and it seems to me scarcely possible to conceive, that any man should employ such forcible and conclusive arguments against a result which he wished to effect. This was not all, however : the letter was, as he supposed it would be, sent by the duke of Popoli to the king, in justification of the change of opinion which it did not fail to work in his mind. The king, it would appear, was irritated by the opposition of Alberoni, and sent to him his confessor, D’Aubenton, charged to show him the letter, and ask if he acknowledged it. This, Alberoni did at once, and returned it with a declaration written on the back, that it contained his sincere opinions, which nothing could ever induce him to revoke. The determination of the king, how-

* Catalonia, Valentia, and Arragon.

† I am not answerable for the above translation of Alberoni’s letter.

ever, was not to be shaken ; and all that Alberoni could obtain was, that the question of peace or war should be submitted to the council of state. That council decided for war ; and Alberoni unwillingly prepared to carry the will of his sovereign into execution.

The supposition that, through the whole of these proceedings, Alberoni's resistance was merely part of a political farce, seems to me utterly irreconcilable with the known facts. The first person who started that opinion was the marquis of St. Philippe, and his authority, as that of a personage mingling with all the events of the day, has been very greatly relied upon. We must remember, however, that he was, in this case, not an impartial witness ; for Alberoni laid to his charge the very war which he imputes to the counsels of Alberoni, declaring that the marquis's ill-judged and vehement representations to Philip, in regard to the arrest of Molinez, irritated the mind of that monarch to such a degree, as to render him insensible to reason. The marquis himself admits that he did all that he could to stimulate Philip to recommence hostilities in Italy, and yet seems both indignant and surprised at Alberoni for attributing to his counsels such a result.

War being finally determined on, Alberoni hastened onward to the two great objects that now lay before him — the one, to prepare the utmost strength of Spain for the contest in which she was about to engage ; the other, to obtain for himself that elevation to the conclave, which he knew would be refused after the first hostile stroke was struck. All the ports of any importance on the eastern coasts of Spain became busy with the preparations for war, and thronged with military ; and all the internal resources of the kingdom were strained to the very utmost to afford the means for executing great enterprises. These very facts, however, tended greatly to impede the personal views of Alberoni, and even to shake his power : the people murmured, and in some places broke out into revolt ; and the emperor, naturally concluding that an attack upon Italy was the object of the

vast armaments in preparation on the Spanish coast, used his utmost influence at the papal court to thwart the designs of Philip's minister upon the purple. His representations were not in vain; and were skilfully opposed by the pope, to the applications of the Spanish ambassadors. The pontiff himself was most averse to the promotion of his adventurous countryman: all the cardinals were more or less opposed to his designs; and Del Giudice, smarting from the many mortifications which Alberoni had inflicted on him, was always ready to lead the way in counselling resistance to the purposes of one whom he cordially hated.

At length, as the moment for beginning the war approached, and Alberoni saw the honour and the safeguard he so eagerly coveted likely to slip from his grasp, he determined to employ menaces instead of solicitations. By his influence, the breach regarding the nunciature had been healed between the courts of Spain and Rome, and the new papal nuncio, triumphing in the renewed authority which Rome was likely to acquire, had already reached Perpignan, on the way to Madrid: but at that point he was stopped by a prohibition from the Spanish monarch; and messengers were despatched to the papal court, intimating that as the wishes of Philip were all refused or evaded by the pope, he should not permit the entrance of the nuncio into his territories till a demonstrable change took place in the conduct of the pontiff. At the same time, Alberoni solemnly declared that the warlike preparations complained of were not destined to affect the emperor, and hinted that they were designed for carrying on the war against the Turks.

Though no one gave the slightest credit to the assertion, the pope, placed in a painful situation between Spain and the empire, was obliged to affect credulity in regard to that which he knew to be false, and unwilling to renounce all the advantages which Alberoni held out in Spain, and of which the cardinal's hat was evidently to be the price, he deter-

mined at length to announce his elevation. Duclos * declares that he wept bitterly in taking this resolution ; but in communicating it to the college of cardinals, he entered into a long and elaborate account of the virtues and services of Alberoni. The cardinal del Giudice still resisted, and endeavoured to persuade the pontiff to recall his words. The pope, however, persevered, and despatched the messenger bearing the tidings of Alberoni's elevation on the 10th of July, 1717.

Not long after, however, when plunged into the embarrassments which followed the recommencement of the war, and threatened with insolent rudeness by the imperial ambassador, the unfortunate pontiff again wept at the act he had been obliged to commit ; and declared his belief that he had damned his own soul by the promotion of Alberoni. Del Giudice, who was present upon the occasion, did not fail to seize the opportunity of triumph, and observed, " That he would willingly follow his holiness any where but to the final dwelling place which he seemed to anticipate."

No sooner was the elevation of Alberoni secure, than the expedition which had been so long in preparation received orders to sail. The English envoy at the court of Madrid instantly demanded, as he was justified in doing, the object and destination of the armament. Alberoni avoided giving any answer to the question for some time ; and occupied the British minister by a renewal of negotiations concerning the commercial relationships of Spain and England, holding out still the hopes of the greatest advantages to Great Britain, in order to deter her from taking an active part in opposition to his designs. When the actual sailing of the fleet from Barcelona compelled him to give some more satisfactory reply, he acknowledged, at length, that it was destined against the emperor's dominions in Italy. But he still endeavoured, and not without success, to make Mr. Doddington believe that he had nothing to do with the renewal of hostilities, except the execution

* Duclos, vol. i. p. 339.

of his master's will ; and that if England continued her friendly relations with Spain, the commercial treaty would be finally settled, greatly to her benefit.

At the same time that he thus dealt with England, he, in like manner, endeavoured to avert any interference on the part of France, by persuading the ambassador of that power that it was his great wish to renew a good understanding between the two branches of the Bourbon family. He affected also to look to France as a mediator between Spain and the emperor ; and endeavoured to excite such hopes and expectations as would renew the ancient jealousy between France and England. In this he was so far successful, that no very powerful remonstrance was made on the part of either of those countries to the attack upon the emperor's dominions ; and the armament quitted Barcelona, reached Sardinia, and conquered that island before any vigorous measures were adopted to impede the proceedings of Spain.

Negotiations, indeed, were not wanting ; and France and England combined to send the strongest remonstrances to the court of Madrid, in regard to its proceedings against the emperor. Proposals, framed upon the same basis as those which had been offered before, were again drawn up, and Mr. Stanhope was sent as plenipotentiary extraordinary, to enforce them, in conjunction with Mr. Doddington at Madrid. At the same time, the emperor indignantly appealed to all Europe, in regard to the aggression of Spain, at a time when he had involved himself in a war with the Turks, for the general benefit, as he declared, of Christendom ; and he called upon the pope to show that he was not a party to the proceedings of Alberoni, by withdrawing his nuncio from Spain, recalling his permission to raise a tax upon the clergy of that country, and degrading Alberoni from the conclave.

The fear of losing Benevento, and of incurring other effects of the emperor's indignation, induced the pontiff to take some measures to satisfy him. He addressed a public letter to the court of Madrid, expressing, in vehe-

ment terms, his indignation at having been deceived : he recalled his permission to levy a tax upon the clergy, and he commanded his nuncio not only to present the brief containing these matters, but to urge his remonstrances in the strongest terms. Alberoni, however, had little fear of the court of Rome ; he knew the principles upon which the conclave was guided too well to fear his degradation from the purple ; the tax upon the clergy he was resolved to enforce ; and telling the nuncio that the pope ought to be very grateful for the favours shown him by Spain, he prevented the public presentation of the brief to the king, and gave Philip an opportunity of calling it, when he found that it was publicly circulated in Europe, " a clumsy forgery, purporting to be a letter from the pope, but filled with such coarse and violent language, as the common father of Christendom could never employ."

At the same time, the minister, now that he was plunged against his will into warfare, before his preparations were ready, showed that firmness and determination which harmonises well with previous caution. To the English and French ministers he asserted the rights of Spain, the weakness and folly exhibited by the peace of Utrecht, and the inadequacy of the reversionary investiture of Parma and Tuscany to the rights and expectations of his master. He then showed, with no slight asperity, that even if these territories were accepted, he could, in no degree, trust to the guarantee of England ; and he pointed out, that since the war of the succession, Great Britain had always acted solely upon the consideration of her interests, without any regard to her pledges whatsoever. She had acknowledged Philip as king of Spain — she had then attempted to dethrone him : she had guaranteed the evacuation of Catalonia and Majorca — and then had left them in the emperor's hands.

In the mean while, it would seem, that the negotiations of Alberoni with the French ambassador had not been without effect. The English envoys spoke

of the necessity which the members of the triple alliance would be under to use force for maintaining the neutrality of Italy. Alberoni, however, replied somewhat contemptuously, that England seemed to take upon herself to urge remonstrances, in the name of the triple alliance, without authority, for that no similar communication had been made upon the part of France. Mr. Stanhope appealed to the French ambassador, but that personage acknowledged that he had no authority from the regent to make use of such language. Thus, new difficulties were thrown in the way of the negotiation; and it was not till after some long delays and severe remonstrances on the part of England, that France was induced to adopt a more decided tone. That, however, having been at length accomplished, Alberoni saw the necessity of, at least, temporising. He stopped the embarkation of men which was then taking place for the kingdom of Naples; and he listened to the representations of the English ambassadors in regard to a congress, to take place in London, for the purpose of arranging the terms of a final pacification.

The preliminary terms which were to form the basis of these negotiations are the subject of general history; but Alberoni's determination, not even to consent to send a plenipotentiary till the emperor had pledged himself to take no hostile step whatsoever, shows the sagacity and determination of the man. In the mean time, his preparations for pursuing the war with extraordinary vigour, should it be necessary, were carried on in every part of Spain; and the energy, activity, and zeal which he displayed, joined to the recent beams of military glory which had been cast upon the arms of Spain by the conquest of Sardinia, seemed to inspire the people with a spirit like his own. The tax upon the clergy was exacted in despite of all opposition; many of the duties were increased, in order to augment the revenue. The French custom of selling offices for the benefit of the state was employed to a very great extent, in order to furnish a temporary supply; great economy was

effected in all the ordinary expenses of collection and administration. Pecuniary reforms took place throughout all branches of the public service ; the king's household, and the queen's private expenses, were regulated with somewhat dangerous frugality ; and in reply to her demands for money to continue the improvements at one of her palaces, Alberoni remarked, " Your majesty would rather be countess of St. Ildefonso, than queen of Spain."

In many of the manufacturing cities of Spain, too, a spirit of industry and activity was introduced which had long been foreign to the manners and habits of the people, and which might have been highly beneficial had its motive been any other than war. Arms, ammunition, clothing, provisions, were now produced from the native resources of Spain ; whereas, in former days, they had been derived almost entirely from foreign sources. Most of the towns and provinces, also, forgetting the apprehensions with which they had seen a new war commenced, now, in the enthusiasm of its first success, made every effort to support it vigorously. Voluntary contributions were voted in various quarters ; and, by the spontaneous efforts of the people, a large force was raised, consisting of sixteen regiments of infantry and eight of cavalry.

Nevertheless, Alberoni did not in the least suspend his own exertions to recruit the forces of the kingdom. He found means even of alluring the ancient enemies of Philip, the Miquelets, from the mountains of Catalonia and Arragon, into the regular service of their sovereign ; and raised two regiments from amongst the wild peasantry, half hunters, half shepherds, which tenanted the brown wastes of the Sierra Morena. All these efforts showed a result most extraordinary, and he is said to have had at his command, at this period, a force of eighty thousand foot and twenty-two thousand horse ; while at sea, either actually in commission or in preparation, he had sixty ships of the line, thirty frigates, and twenty galleys. But under

all this show of military power, there were points of weakness that must not be forgotten. Though the soldiery had become veteran in long and severe struggles, the revenues of Spain, destined to pay them, were insufficient, and already overstrained. Though the vessels were in good condition, and plentifully manned, the commercial navy of the country was too small to afford a nursery for seamen, without which no country can ever become a powerful maritime state.

While such preparations were taking place on the one hand, and such negotiations on the other, for the purpose of preventing their effect, the whole European world was agitated with anxiety to know what were the real designs and ultimate purposes of Alberoni. His plan, according to one* who was well acquainted, at all events, with the rumours current in the various courts of Europe, consisted of eight points, general or particular. First, to save the honour of the king of Spain. Secondly, to maintain the repose of Italy. Thirdly, to insure to the sons of the queen of Spain the succession to Tuscany and Parma; and to obtain for the king of Spain, Naples, Sicily, and the ports of Tuscany. To divide the state of Mantua, giving the town and part of the territory to the Venetians, the other part to the duke of Guastala. Fifthly, to leave the entire Milanese and the Montferrat to the emperor. Sixthly, to bestow Sardinia upon the duke of Savoy, with the title of king, in order to compensate for the loss of Sicily. Seventhly, to restore Commaccio to the pope. And, eighthly, to divide the catholic Low Countries between France and Holland.

It is not improbable that a part of these projects did really enter into the general plan of Alberoni, as, in fact, he himself admitted; but it must still be remembered, while viewing these facts with a reference to the question of his having hurried on his sovereign into war with the empire, that he never denied that his ultimate object was to insure greater advantages to Spain, and to

* Duclos.

establish the balance of power on a firmer basis in Europe than had been provided by the peace of Utrecht.

In the midst of these proceedings, however, while the negotiations with England and France were still pending, while Europe was agitated by apprehensions or expectations, and Spain was ringing with preparations and self-gratulations upon new success, an event occurred which had nearly changed the whole face of European politics, and cast Alberoni from the height of power at the very moment that he had attained the summit of his own personal ambition. Long subject to an anomalous hypochondriac disease, which, in the early part of his career had affected his energies in a very considerable degree, Philip V. had scarcely time to rejoice in the conquest of Sardinia, before he was seized by a new attack of his malady, which assumed a more aggravated form than ever, and soon reduced him to the brink of the grave. The partisans of the favourite, and of the queen, were all overwhelmed with consternation, and their enemies, suddenly waking from a state of lethargy, prepared every engine to effect their overthrow.

It was in vain, however, that the latter laboured to effect their object by cabals in Spain; and they, consequently, had recourse to negotiations with the French regent, from whom strong promises of protection were obtained by the malecontents. Rumours of the most black and atrocious purposes, on the part of the queen and Alberoni, were busily spread through the country, and listened to with credulous avidity. They were said to entertain the design of poisoning the children of the late queen, or were reported to hold the king, fallen as some people did not scruple to affirm into imbecility, in a state of bondage, which enabled them to act as they pleased. The latter rumour was so strong, that it was put boldly forward by a party of the nobles headed by Aguilar, the ancient enemy of Vendôme and Vendôme's favourite, as a motive for appealing to the regent Orleans for immediate help.

In the mean time, the king had been reduced to

extremity, and a succession of fainting fits having come on, and seeming likely to end in nothing but death, the confessor was sent for to administer the last rites of the church, and a will was hastily drawn up, the contents of which, however, were never known. In order to remove the doubts which might arise from the state of seclusion in which the sick monarch was kept, six grandees of Spain were admitted to witness the king's signature of the will, and the knowledge of the desperate state to which he was reduced spread an extraordinary degree of agitation through the capital for the two following days. This crisis in his disorder passed, however, without the apprehended result; and from that moment the health of Philip began to amend, till his complete restoration confounded the cabals which were going on in the capital.*

During the height of the king's illness, however, an adventure occurred to Alberoni, which served in no degree to raise him in the eyes of a people so sensible to ridicule as the Spaniards. Jealous of all interference during the king's malady, the queen and Alberoni had studiously excluded from his chamber all the nobility of Spain, and even all the ordinary officers of the household, taking for a pretence the nature of his disease, which was aggravated by the presence of many people. Certain ceremonial rules, however, never dispensed with at the court of Spain, gave the right of entrance to one or two persons, and none of these were disposed to wave their privilege. The king's nurse, a very important person at that court, claimed the right of entering in the morning, to give the monarch his shoes and stockings; and the office of grand chamberlain, entitled the holder thereof to be present at the consultations of physicians in case of the king being ill, and to witness the administration of the medicines prescribed.

With the functions of the nurse Alberoni himself dared not interfere; but the post of grand chamberlain

* Duclos declares that he never fully recovered the use of his faculties; but there seems to have been but little foundation for such an assertion.

was at that time filled by the marquis of Villena, duke of Escalona, a grandee of the first class, formerly viceroy of Naples. He was devotedly attached to his sovereign, had rendered many signal services to the crown, and on various occasions had shown a degree of decision and ability which Alberoni regarded as dangerous. He was, however, punctilious in the performance of the duties of his office, and as soon as it became necessary to consult the royal physician, the duke presented himself to see the due administration of the remedies.

A hint was speedily given to him that this close attendance was disagreeable to the king, and would be dispensed with: but Villena was not to be deterred; and Alberoni at length, by the queen's order, directed the page in waiting to refuse him admittance. The duke, however, presented himself as usual, and on being opposed by the page pushed the door open in his face, telling him that he was an insolent scoundrel. He then advanced towards the king's bed, proceeding slowly, on account both of the gout, to which he was subject, and the weakness of advanced age. The queen, who was sitting at the head of the king's bed, beckoned to Alberoni, and begged him to induce the duke to retire; and advancing towards him, the cardinal informed him that the king did not wish to be disturbed. The duke replied by giving Alberoni the lie; and asking, if he thought him blind to believe such a story, when he had never gone near the head of the bed, and the king had never spoken.

The cardinal, however, persevered in the endeavour to make him quit the room, and for that purpose took him by the arm; the duke resisted, and in the struggle with his younger opponent fell into an arm chair: but exasperated by the insult, he held the minister tight by the sleeve, and maugre his clerical dignity, belaboured the prince of the Roman church on the large head and broad shoulders with his cane; calling him a little scoundrel, to whom he would teach the respect he owed to him. The queen and the servants remained,

we are told, immovable in the petrification of court etiquette during a scene so strange and new ; but as soon as Alberoni had disengaged himself from the passionate chamberlain, one of the pages advanced to that nobleman, and aided him to quit the room. No sooner had the duke reached his house, than he received an order to quit Madrid immediately ; but before he went, he had the gratification of seeing his dwelling filled with all that was noble in the capital, come to offer a testimony of respect to his virtues and courage. This was a sufficient warning to Alberoni not to proceed farther against his antagonist ; but the most extraordinary part of the tale, as told both by St. Simon and Duclos, is, that the king was never in the slightest degree aware of the indecent scene which had taken place in his bed-chamber. Ere long Villena was recalled to Madrid ; but he repelled all Alberoni's advances towards a reconciliation, and never failed to treat the minister with haughty contempt.

The recovery of the king was followed immediately by a mark of his gratitude to Alberoni for his devoted attention during his illness, and for services which Philip then warmly appreciated. The rich bishopric of Malaga having fallen vacant, it was immediately bestowed upon the minister, who thereupon applied to the pope for a dispensation in regard to non-residence. The pontiff was now doubly embarrassed ; after all that had passed in regard to the attack upon Sardinia, he dared not appear to gratify the Spanish minister entirely, and yet dared not refuse one who held in his hands the whole power of Spain. In this dilemma he found an expedient ; and writing to the cardinal told him, that he feared to grant him the dispensation for the whole twelve months of the year, lest the emperor should execute the threats which he already held out : but that he would dispense with his residing in his diocese six months each year, while the councils gave bishops a right to be absent six months also ; so that between the two the dispensation would be complete.

This was all that Alberoni desired ; and indeed, as he soon afterwards showed in the case of Seville, he was a person very likely to dispense with dispensations when any great interest was concerned, and to set at defiance the hand from which he had just forced the long withheld cardinalate. .

In the mean while, the immense preparations which Spain continued to make convinced the other powers of Europe that the reluctant promise of Alberoni to send a plenipotentiary to London was merely a stratagem to remedy the hasty proceedings of Philip, and gain time to put the resources of Spain into a better state. Of all these powers, however, England was the only one which acted with consistency and vigour. That she acted unjustly* is more than probable ; that she acted impolitically is also very possible ; but still she maintained the part that she had chosen with energy, equipped a large maritime force for the express purpose of protecting the coasts of Italy, and gave the emperor such assurances of assistance, as could leave no doubt in regard to the firmness of her purpose.

Holland, in the mean while, attentive to nothing but her commercial interests, held back from any share in the active opposition to Spain ; and France, under the duke of Orleans, continued only with still more subtilty to play the game which she had hitherto pursued, holding out to England promises of co-operation, which she took no step to perform, and sending as plenipotentiary to Madrid the marquis de Nancrè, with instructions to follow precisely the opposite course to that which was pointed out to St. Aignan, the ordinary ambassador, for his private conduct. Nancrè was directed to treat privately with Alberoni ; to avoid giving the slightest offence to the court of Madrid ; and only to support the representations of England as much as was necessary to maintain an appearance of sincerity. At the same time, St. Aignan was ordered to keep up an intimate correspondence with all the disaffected nobles of Spain ; to

* In the manifest preference that she showed towards the emperor.

attack Alberoni in every particular and by every means ; and to endeavour to weaken his influence and overthrow his power, as far as it could be done without widening the breach between the courts of Paris and Madrid. The emperor at the same time made vast preparations to meet the approaching storm ; loaded Alberoni with public reproaches ; and endeavoured to call down the parchment thunders of Rome upon his head for treating with the infidels, and furnishing them with men, money, and ammunition, in order to create a diversion, while he despoiled the empire of its Italian possessions.

We must now turn to consider the operations of Alberoni in opposition to all the great powers of Europe — to the bold hostility of some, the secret machination of others, and the dull renitency of those who would fain have been his friends, though they were leagued amongst his enemies ; and if energetic activity of mind, joined to wide views and resolute courage, form any title to the name of greatness, this period of Alberoni's life is that in which he most justly deserves it. In his relationship with England, he began with remonstrance and invective ; and two of his letters *, written in the vain hope of still deterring the British ministers from sending to the Mediterranean that aid which they had promised the emperor, must not be omitted, to show the means that he employed, and the views that he took.

“ The catholic king,” he says, addressing Mr. Doddington, “ will take no resolution on the subject of the commercial treaty, until he sees the developement of the piece. You are a good witness of the sincerity of his intentions towards the king of England ; you well know that he did not hesitate to sacrifice, by two new conventions, all the advantages which he had gained by the treaty of Utrecht, forgetting, that by the means of England he had been despoiled of his revenues, provinces, and kingdoms ; an injustice which will constantly cry for vengeance, as contrary to all laws divine and human.

* From Coxe's *Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain*, but published also in the *Seward Anecdotes*, vol. ii. p. 262.

By so great a sacrifice, the catholic king thought he should bind the king of England to a grateful return, and the British nation to a closer union with Spain, or that on occasions where neither nations had any particular interest, the king of England would at least continue neuter.

“ Nevertheless, with unspeakable chagrin I see, that neither of these cases will happen, and I shall be exposed to the just resentment of their catholic majesties. Every gazette proves that your ministry is no longer English, but German, and basely sold to the court of Vienna ; and that, through the cabals so common in your country, attempts are making to draw the nation itself into the snare. It is a strong proof of what I say, that, having exhausted England of men and money to acquire states and kingdoms for the archduke*, they have recently supplied him with a large subsidy.

“ The sentiments of esteem and friendship which I entertain for you, and which I shall always continue to entertain, oblige me to speak to you with sincerity.”

This letter was dated the 5th of April, 1718, and eleven days afterwards it was followed by another to the following effect :—“ M. Patiño is arrived here, and has brought the list of duties, which is approved by the chiefs of all the different nations at Cadiz : it is in the hands of his majesty, but he will not sign it till he has seen the developement of the piece, as I have already informed you. I cannot believe that your nation will relinquish its advantages to concern itself in the affairs of a prince with whom it has no interest, and from whom it can draw no advantage, against the king of Spain, from whom it has received so many marks of good-will. I cannot think that so wise a people will place in the hands of the archduke the kingdom of Sicily, to render him formidable to all Europe. Excuse me, sir, but I cannot help saying, that all the cabinets of Europe are lost to common sense ; that policy has

* The Spanish court still affected to refuse the imperial title to the emperor Charles.

given place to the caprice of a few individuals, who, without rhyme or reason, perhaps for their private interests, cut and pare states and kingdoms, as if they were Dutch cheeses."

Finding these remonstrances without effect, Alberoni proceeded to throw difficulties in the way of the king of England, and carried his intrigues into the heart of that monarch's own territories. A strong opposition already existed in the House of Commons, headed by the famous sir Robert Walpole; a large part of the nation was discontented with the government of the time, a large party discontented with the dynasty, and the divisions were rendered more intricate by the violent enmity which existed between the king and the prince of Wales. In order to add greater embarrassments to the difficulties of the ministry, in order to afford fresh subjects of complaint to the opposition, in order to excite the passions and discontent of the people, Alberoni employed secret agents to circulate vehement statements of the infractions of the constitution, the weight of taxation, and the attempts upon civil and political liberty.

He addressed letters, at the same time, to all the principal merchants of England, pointing out the great commercial advantages offered by Spain, and the detriment and loss which a rupture with that country must entail upon Great Britain; and he likewise gave the strongest hopes of protection and assistance to the important jacobite party, which still existed. There is every reason to believe, also, that he strongly urged Philip, instead of employing the large force he had prepared for the conquest of a petty sovereignty in Italy, to carry the war into the dominions of his most formidable enemy; and setting the pretender at the head of such an army as to insure the prospect of success, thus deprive England, by a civil war, of all power to oppose his after efforts on the continent.

Such were some of the bold and vigorous measures with which Alberoni opposed the bold and vigorous

conduct of the British government. The subtilty of the duke of Orleans he met with equal subtilty, and turned his arms against himself. He perceived at once the double policy of the French court, and understood very well that the object of the regent was, by his instructions to the marquis de Nancrè, to maintain the alliance and renew the friendship of the two branches of the Bourbon race; while, by the proceedings which the duke of St. Aignan was ordered to carry on, he overthrew a minister that was obnoxious to him and to his views. But Alberoni seized upon all the demonstrations of respect and confidence shown him by De Nancrè, took care that their private interviews and secret correspondence should be made known to the Spanish grandes engaged in the intrigues of St. Aignan; and he spread abroad amongst the people, that it was the desire of the French court to restore to power the obnoxious financier Orri, and the detested favourite Orsini.

By this means he produced an impression amongst all classes in Spain, by no means favourable to the sincerity of the duke of Orleans; and by the same display of secret communication with the French plenipotentiary extraordinary, he roused the jealous suspicions of the British ministers at Madrid, and sowed doubts and difficulties amongst them, which delayed and weakened all their proceedings. At the same time he retaliated upon the regent, in the heart of France, the intrigues which that prince was carrying on at Madrid. By manifestos and papers thrown amongst the people, and secret agents employed in every different direction, he increased the discontent which the infamous life, lavish expenses, and financial difficulties of the duke of Orleans had produced; he endeavoured to produce a new rising amongst the huguenots; and he offered assistance to the malecontents of Brittany, who were already almost in an actual state of revolt.

With the Dutch, his proceedings were more easy. There were none of the materials for his various war-

like preparations which that nation was not willing to sell to him or to any one. They were unwilling to enter into the warlike views of England, upon motives which Alberoni well understood, and from those motives he clearly perceived that no inducements would lead them to take part with Spain. For the purpose, however, of retaining them in that state of neutrality, which was the best that could be expected of them, the cardinal held out to Holland the prospect of all those commercial advantages which England was likely to forfeit by her undisguised enmity towards Spain.

The charges of the emperor he met at once with bold decision ; and noticing immediately a paper which the imperial ambassador had caused to be placarded on the Vatican, he denied that he had supplied the Turks with money, stores, or ammunition, and indignantly gave the accusation the lie. He acknowledged, however, boldly, and justified his purposes of entering into an alliance with Mahommedans, in order to create a diversion against a great, powerful, and grasping enemy ; and he cited the fact of the popes themselves having set the example of so doing, in circumstances precisely similar. The remonstrances of the imperial ambassador, however, were so strong, that the pontiff dared not resist his dictation ; and to gratify the emperor, and evince to Europe in general, that he was not a party to Alberoni's negotiations with the infidels, he refused him the bulls of investiture for the rich see of Seville, which had just become vacant, by the death of cardinal Arias, and which had been immediately bestowed by the king upon Alberoni. He alleged to the Spanish ambassador, as his motive for thus acting, the canons which forbade the translation of a bishop from one see to another before the lapse of three years from the date of the previous appointment. This, however, did not satisfy Alberoni, who well knew with what readiness the see of Rome could construe the canons to its own purposes ; and he is said by Duclos to have appropriated the revenues of Seville and Malaga together, though the

fact seems to me to be very doubtful, and other good authorities declare that he lost both the bishoprics instead of gaining both.

Notwithstanding the injunctions of the pope, and the wrath of the emperor, he continued to instigate the Turks to attack once more the eastern dominions of the empire, and prepared to raise up in the same quarter another assailant, who might divert the imperial forces from the defence of Italy. The famous Ragotski, prince of Transylvania, driven from his native country, and reduced to the lowest ebb of fortune, had taken refuge in a convent near Paris, and spent his time in the exercise of deep devotion. Alberoni, however, judged, and judged rightly, that the flame of ambition was not yet extinct in his bosom ; and, through the means of the Spanish ambassador in Paris, he opened a communication with the exile, and offered him pecuniary aid to a large amount, for the purpose of subsidising a Turkish force, to assert once more in arms his cause in Transylvania.

Ragotski listened eagerly to the proposals of Alberoni ; and a negotiation was commenced, in the course of which the Spanish minister promised the unhappy exile the means of maintaining an army of thirty thousand men, upon the Hungarian frontier. A communication was at the same time opened with the Ottoman Porte, and after but short deliberations, Ragotski set out for the East and was received with honour and distinction ; but the peace of Passarowitz, which was signed in July, 1718, destroyed the hopes which Alberoni entertained of a new diversion from the side of Turkey.

During the early part of that year, there was scarcely a court of Europe in which Alberoni was not carrying on negotiations or intrigues. With Russia and Sweden * he

* Mr. Coxe, in his *Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain*, after having given an account of the destruction of the Spanish fleet by Byng, and the remonstrances which ensued, on the part of Spain, says, " It was not, however, by memorials and papers that the Spanish minister manifested his resentment ; " and he then proceeds to notice the negotiations commenced between Russia and Sweden, under Alberoni's mediation, which might mislead the reader into imagining, that the conferences were brought about

was more successful, perhaps, than in any other quarter, inasmuch as the passions of the two monarchs who ruled those countries were already excited in the very manner that he could have desired. Charles XII., exasperated against England for the part she had taken against him in the late war with Denmark, had long carried on negotiations with the adherents of the Stuart dynasty; and the arrest of his ambassadors in England and Holland, by disclosing the intrigues in which he had evidently taken part against the reigning family of Great Britain, only served to aggravate his enmity. Nor was the great-minded, but semi-barbarous, monarch of Russia less irritated against England, for the continual opposition which she had made to his ambitious views upon the frontiers of Germany.

Thus the agents of Alberoni found all prepared for the success of their negotiations; and after some rapid discussion the two northern powers agreed to lay aside their ancient grievances, and unite for one general purpose. Plenipotentiaries from both the great northern states met on the Isle of Aland, and, under the mediation of the Spanish crown, soon drew up the sketch of a treaty of confederation, by which mutual concessions were agreed upon, and either direct or collateral efforts, in conjunction with a Spanish force, were arranged, in order, it would seem, to restore the house of Stuart to the throne of Great Britain.

by the minister, in consequence of the aggression of Byng. To guard against mistakes, therefore, it is necessary to remark, that the conferences of the Isle of Aland took place certainly as early as May, 1718, and the attack of Byng upon the Spanish fleet did not occur till August of the same year. Lemontey, in his clever *Sketches of the Regency of the Duke of Orleans*, attempts to prove that no such engagements took place on the part of Sweden, to assist the jacobites. His observations are well worthy of attention, and the whole matter of farther investigation; but the proofs he brings forward to show that the conspiracy of Goertz and Gylenborg was totally without the privacy or consent of Charles XII. rather confirm my belief that the contrary was the case. When the whole business was discovered, and the Swedish ministers in England and Holland arrested, Charles certainly disavowed their conduct, and demanded that they should be given up to him for punishment. Did he punish them, however? Certainly not; and, on the contrary, raised one of them higher in his confidence than ever. As these points are of vast importance in an estimate of Alberoni's character, I have translated Lemontey's observations, and add them at the end of this notice.

Such were the measures pursued by Alberoni, in order to divert the forces of the allies from their meditated opposition to the designs of Spain ; but it was necessary, in the first place, ere he proceeded to carry those designs into execution, to negotiate with a prince, who, though possessing no great power, was capable, from the peculiar circumstances of his situation, of offering such resistance to Spain in the outset, as would render her proceedings difficult, if not fruitless, till the allies were ready to meet her with a stronger force. This prince was Victor Amadeus, duke of Savoy, who, after the treaty of Utrecht, had been put in possession of Sicily, but who was now about to be despoiled of that island by the allies ; receiving, as a compensation, the nominal equivalent of Sardinia.

Angry, as he well might be, both at the loss of important dominion, and at the insulting want of consideration which the allies displayed towards him, the passions of the duke of course led him strongly towards Spain ; but it was very clear to him, that if the Spanish arms were to conquer Sicily, as well as Sardinia, the conquest would be for Philip V., and not for the duke of Savoy. Placed, like the fox in the fable, in the midst of much stronger beasts, the princes of the house of Savoy have ever been anxious to supply by subtilty that which they wanted in power ; and, following this principle, Victor Amadeus was desirous, in his present circumstances, to temporise with all parties, in order to see who would give most for the privilege of despoiling him unopposed. The allies, however, soon showed themselves so unceremonious, and so heedless whether he resisted or not, that his interest, as well as his indignation, led him to side with Spain ; and the well-timed overtures of Alberoni, who held out to him the prospect of obtaining, as a compensation for Sicily, a considerable portion of the rich Milanese, together with the duchy of Modena, soon led to a negotiation, which, though it terminated in no precise treaty, induced the duke to give very unequivocal signs of his attachment to Spain, to withdraw

a large part of his troops from Sicily, and approach in a very hostile attitude the frontier of the Milanese.

All things being thus prepared ; intestine dissensions sown in France and England ; Holland lured to hold back from the alliance by the prospect of commercial advantages ; Sweden and Russia allied to attack Great Britain and restore the Stuart dynasty ; the connivance of the duke of Savoy obtained ; and a diversion under Ragotski to be hoped for upon the Hungarian frontier, Alberoni might well believe that he had done every thing which a vast and comprehensive intellect could do, to remedy the rash haste of his master, and secure success in their great enterprise, to the inefficient naval and military force of Spain. Under these circumstances he issued his final orders for the departure of the armament which had so long been preparing at Barcelona, and on the 18th of June the fleet set sail with 30,000 veteran troops, equipped and provided in a manner which had not been equalled since the best days of the Spanish monarchy. After pausing at Sardinia to take in some reinforcements, the Spanish admiral made all sail for Palermo ; and on the 1st of July, just twelve days after they got under weigh, the Spanish army landed in Sicily : and while the Savoyard garrisons retreated into the citadels, the towns threw open their gates, and the people, with loud acclamations, received the Spaniards as brothers and deliverers.

In the mean while, the other states of Europe, astonished at a display of energy of which they had conceived Spain to be incapable, hastened all their proceedings ; and in the same month, wherein the descent had taken place, the articles of the quadruple alliance were signed at Paris and London, and three months were allowed by that treaty for the king of Spain and the duke of Savoy to give their formal accession to the terms which it dictated. If they refused their consent, at the end of that period, the contracting powers bound themselves to enforce in arms the treaty upon which they had agreed. The terms of this treaty had been notified to

Alberoni, even before its signature; and no sooner had it been signed by earl Stanhope in Paris, than that nobleman set off for the court of Spain for the purpose of persuading Philip and his minister to accept it.

In the mean time, however, the descent had taken place in Sicily; and admiral Byng, with a very considerable fleet, had appeared in the Mediterranean, commanded to protect the coasts of Italy against the aggressions of Spain. Sicily was not mentioned in his instructions. No sooner did he reach the coast of Spain, than he notified his arrival to Mr. Stanhope, who had succeeded Mr. Doddington at the court of Madrid, and desired him to inform the king of Spain of the fact and purpose of his appearance in the Mediterranean. Mr. Stanhope proceeded to seek an interview with Alberoni, and communicated to him the letter of Byng. Irritated by the dictatorial tone which the British admiral assumed, the minister replied, that Spain was not to be intimidated; and that he was so confident in the courage and devotion of the Spanish fleet, that he should feel no apprehension even if admiral Byng thought fit to attack it.

With irritating coolness, Stanhope, for his only reply, presented a list of the British fleet, and requested Alberoni to compare it with that of Spain. This so exasperated the Spanish minister, that he gave way to a burst of uncontrollable passion, snatched the paper from Mr. Stanhope's hand, and tearing it into pieces, trampled it under his feet. In the end, he informed the British envoy that he would communicate his message to the king, and let him know the result. It was not till after considerable delay, however, that a direct reply was received, when it was to the following effect: — "His catholic majesty has done me the honour to tell me that the chevalier Byng may execute the orders which he has received from the king his master."

Not long after these transactions, lord Stanhope arrived at Madrid, and tendered the quadruple alliance for the acceptance of the king of Spain. Some negotiations took place, which are still, and perhaps ever will be,

enveloped in very great obscurity. The first doubt appears to be, whether Alberoni was or was not in any degree desirous of now terminating the war by negotiation. Two circumstances might induce him to wish for such a result. In the first place, Spain now occupied a much more commanding position than she had done at first, and might wring from the desire of peace expressed and felt by the allied powers several important concessions in addition to those proposed by the terms of the quadruple alliance. In the second place, the allies, on the other hand, showed so firm a determination of supporting the emperor, and such a state of preparation for doing so effectually, that the ultimate projects of the king of Spain upon Italy were rendered far less probable of execution than ever. At the same time, Charles XII. of Sweden, instead of proceeding to effect the promised diversion against England, had plunged himself into his fatal enterprise upon Norway; and, though he calculated upon conquering it in a few months, Alberoni knew the course of human events too well to trust to such a contingency.

These circumstances might perhaps induce the cardinal to prefer the means of negotiation to the chance of war; and it is at all events certain that he assumed so strongly the appearance of such an inclination, as to lead lord Stanhope, even to the very last day of his stay in Spain, to believe that he was sincere, and only embarrassed by the obstinacy of the king. The second doubtful part of the negotiation refers to what were really the inducements held out by the allies in addition to those publicly proffered by the quadruple alliance. The whole story told by Duclos in regard to the mission of Louville, and the offer of Gibraltar at that time, is so devoid of every shade of probability, so much in opposition to known facts and customary usages, that few will differ from Mr. Coxe in rejecting it entirely; while, at the same time, I can entertain no doubt that George I. either directly or indirectly authorised the regent duke of Orleans to offer the surrender of Gibraltar

to the king of Spain, on condition of his accepting the terms proposed by the quadruple alliance. It has been also supposed that the earl of Stanhope was permitted to renew that idea upon this visit to Madrid. Whether this offer was clogged by any conditions or not, I believe has never been ascertained; but it appears to me not to have taken place before the year 1717 *; and that in all probability it was the king of England's authorisation to make this offer, which induced the duke of Orleans to send monsieur de Nancrè † to Madrid in the hopes of regaining a part of the French influence over the Spanish court, by bringing about an event which he justly believed would be most gratifying to Philip himself, and still more so to his people, who had always viewed the possession of Gibraltar by Great Britain as a stain upon the national reputation.

While the negotiations were pending, however, the great successes of the Spanish troops in Sicily, into the details of which we cannot enter here, excited the enthusiasm of the people of Spain to the highest pitch. Nothing was heard but rejoicings and acclamations; and the fair prospect that existed of the entire conquest of Sicily raised the pride, and added to the consequence, of Philip. The hopes and expectations of the minister, also, were no less increased, at the same time, by the arrival of a considerable amount of treasure from America, and the news of great successes lately obtained by the Spanish fleets in the East over a strong piratical force, which had nearly destroyed the American trade, and whose

* The first mention of this offer appears, from the letters of Dubois, to have been made when the celebrated minister of the regency was in England as ambassador. At that time, however, it is clear that no permission was given by the British government to make a formal offer of ceding Gibraltar; and Dubois was only permitted to cast the idea vaguely into the negotiations as an inducement to Spain. It is clear, however, from the letters of Dubois, written two or three years after, that in the mean time a more formal permission had been given; and we find that, notwithstanding his subserviency to the British cabinet, he bitterly reproaches the English ministry for having drawn back from their engagements in regard to that fortress. See observations on this subject in the life of Dubois.

† This is merely a supposition, for which I have no authority to produce, and which, probably, may be as incorrect as most of the other conjectures upon the same subject.

existence had been a continual reproach to the arms of Spain, added to the national exultation.

During lord Stanhope's stay in Madrid, he was twice admitted, with the marquis de Nancrè to an audience of the king and queen ; and on both those occasions Philip and Elizabeth expressed themselves, in regard to the allies, in a manner which greatly confirmed Alberoni's account of the king's obstinate determination in favour of war. The language of Philip and his queen showed no signs whatever of the set and formal arrangement of a speech prepared in the cabinet, but was full of the energy and vehemence of a ruling passion, and evinced that, whether Alberoni joined in their sentiments or not, the course which had been pursued against the emperor was in full accordance with the feelings, if not in obedience to the orders, of the monarch and his wife. They did not scruple to call the terms offered them unjust in themselves, injurious to their interests, and insulting to their dignity ; and in reply to the notification which followed, that if, at the end of three months, the king of Spain did not accede to the quadruple treaty, the contracting powers would enforce it by arms, Alberoni was directed to inform lord Stanhope that Philip would never cease his efforts till Sicily and Sardinia were ceded to Spain ; till the duke of Savoy received a compensation for the loss of the former kingdom ; and till the emperor bound himself to maintain only a certain number of troops in Italy.

Although this resolute and somewhat outrageous reply was sufficient to break off any farther public negotiation, and to induce lord Stanhope to take his departure from Madrid, the private communications of Alberoni with the British ambassador were still of a nature to leave hopes of an accommodation. He complained bitterly, in his last interview with lord Stanhope, of the rashness, obstinacy, and jealousy of the king ; and he declared, with tears, that nothing should be wanting on his part to adjust, in an amicable manner, the differences between the Spanish and allied courts. Whe-

ther private intelligence had by this time reached Madrid, that the Spanish fleet in the Mediterranean had been attacked and totally defeated by admiral Byng, may be a matter of doubt, but it has been supposed that such was the case, and that it was in consequence of that event that Alberoni, by private communication, lowered the tone of the public reply which had been made to earl Stanhope.

I am inclined to believe, however, that such was not the case, and that Alberoni was perfectly ignorant, at the time of lord Stanhope's departure, of the somewhat hasty, if not unjust, proceeding of Byng. My reasons for this belief are twofold. In the first place, lord Stanhope had reached Bayonne on the night of the 1st of September, having performed a journey which then occupied several days. Byng's victory took place on the 11th of August, off the port of Syracuse, and therefore, though possible, it was barely possible that the tidings of that event should have reached the Spanish coast, and thence been transmitted to Madrid before the British plenipotentiary had quitted that capital. In the second place, I am inclined to believe, from the whole of Alberoni's deportment before and afterwards, that the news of such an aggression would only have served to irritate him, and render him less anxious to negotiate.

No sooner was it known to the minister, that the fleet which he had used such vast exertions to produce was utterly annihilated by that of England, than he broke forth into the most vehement expressions of indignation, at what he called the perfidious violation of national faith, which had just been committed. The instructions of admiral Byng, he asserted, which had been communicated to the king of Spain, were merely to defend the territories of the emperor in Italy; and it had been notified to the court of Madrid, that three months would be given for its final decision, before England took part with the emperor in hostile measures against the Spanish crown. Sicily, he added, was neither any part of Italy, nor, by the treaty of

Utrecht, any part of the emperor's territory ; and he therefore declared, that the aggression of Byng, without any declaration of war whatsoever, was a most notorious violation of national faith.

These sentiments and remonstrances were expressed in two letters, or rather manifestos ; for though addressed to the secretary of state, they were made public — the one from Monteleone, the ambassador in London, the other from Alberoni himself. At the same time, in order to deprive of its force the ready reply, that the king of Spain had no right to remonstrate against unannounced aggressions, when the very fleet attacked had committed a still greater breach of the ordinary rules, by landing a hostile force in the territories of a friendly prince, the duke of Savoy, Alberoni wrote a letter to that potentate, also, informing him, that the Spanish invasion of Sicily had been undertaken and executed solely with a tender view to his interests, in order that that island might not be taken from him unjustly, and delivered over to the emperor, in the manner agreed upon between the parties to the quadruple alliance ; and in the course of after-transactions he declared, that the whole proceeding had been determined upon in consequence of the plenipotentiaries of the allied powers having suffered their designs upon Sicily to transpire in the conferences which had previously taken place in London.

Doubtless Alberoni did not expect Victor Amadeus to give very great credit to his assertion. And that prince, wavering in his policy according to circumstances, had been induced considerably to alter his views by the victory of Byng, the determined conduct of the British ministry, and the large Austrian force, which, set at liberty by the peace of Passarowitz, was now pouring on towards the scene of contention. Though there can be little doubt that he had given every facility to an invasion which he could not resist, and by which he might benefit, he now affected the tone of an injured person, and as loudly complained of being deceived and aggrieved by Alberoni, as Alberoni complained of being deceived and

aggrieved by England. His complaints, however, were made rather too loud ; for the Spanish court, provoked at his tergiversation, replied by a manifesto, which exposed his conduct completely, and he obtained from no party either credit for his sincerity, or compassion for his misfortunes.

The effect which Alberoni intended to produce by the complaints and remonstrances which he published in England were not without some effect, though not to the extent which he probably expected. He certainly did furnish to the discontented fresh subjects for murmur and outcry ; and when the parliament met in the month of November following, the opposition made the terms of the quadruple alliance a subject of severe censure upon the ministry, and reprobated, in language of strong indignation, the attack made upon the Spanish fleet by admiral Byng. Notwithstanding all the powers of sir Robert Walpole and the weight of his party, however, the majority of the house of commons gave its sanction, both to the proceedings of the minister and the conduct of the admiral ; and Alberoni found, as all foreign ministers must find, when they attempt to raise up factions in this country, that our political state is so complicated with our national character, as to set all the calculations of strangers at defiance ; and that none but an English demagogue, upon English principles, can move, in any great degree, the English people.

We must now turn to Alberoni's proceedings against France, proceedings which, whatever likelihood of success they might afford — which, however many might be the partisans of Philip V. in France, and however odious the government of the duke of Orleans might have become — appear to me to have been unwise, extravagant, and notwithstanding the design of diverting France from any active co-operation in the measures of England, as ill-timed as they were ill-executed. To conceive that Philip, notwithstanding the popularity of his cause with a great number of the nobility, and with a large portion of the army, could wrest from the hands of the duke

of Orleans a power which that prince had now exercised for some time, without a struggle of a severe, if not a permanent character, was to run counter to all probability ; and if a struggle were to be the consequence, it may naturally be asked what was the use of hastening forward a collision with France, when Spain had already fully as much as she could do to follow up her attack upon the emperor. To do so was, in fact, to create a diversion in favour of the empire ; and the lowest number of troops with which his most sanguine partisans in France suggested that Philip should march to Paris was 10,000 men ; a force which he could by no means spare, even to accomplish the conquest of Sicily.

Alberoni, however, was deceived by the representations of some of his agents in Paris, by his own genius for intrigue, and by the eagerness of Philip to possess the regency of France. He fancied that the government of the duke of Orleans could be got rid of by a *coup de main* ; and he undertook to do that by stratagem, which, perhaps, might have been accomplished in such a manner, but which required force to carry it through, if conspiracy failed.

The situation of France at that moment was peculiar, and certainly gave the greatest opening to intrigue, that any period of history ever presented. When Philip II., in the days of the famous league, entertained ambitious views upon France—views which he hoped to accomplish amidst the convulsions of armed factions, that he irritated and strengthened—there existed not one thousandth part so great a chance that success would attend the efforts of any monarch of a foreign country as that which was apparent under the comparatively peaceful rule of the duke of Orleans. In the struggles of the league, a number of powerful men, equally distinguished for their genius, their determination, and their influence, would have been found ready at a moment's notice, after having got rid of the government they opposed, to turn their swords against him who had

aided them in the strife and sought to take advantage of their divisions.

Such was not the case, however, during the regency. The only one in France who united great talents and great power was the duke of Orleans himself. Those who were opposed to him in his native country were all, more or less, weak in mind, or destitute of authority; and if by their united efforts the regent was overthrown, there was no one capable of offering the slightest opposition to the views of the Spanish king. It was the regent only that Alberoni had to fear in prosecution of his purpose; it was the regent only that he had to remove in order to obtain his object; and to that end he now employed all his art; which, had it been seconded with equal wisdom and skill by his agents, might perhaps have proved successful. The risks were certainly too great, circumstanced as Spain then was; and the charge of rashness, in this instance, is well merited; but, at the same time, great and daily increasing probabilities induced Alberoni to hazard an attempt which proved his ruin.

The intense debaucheries of the regent and his companions had disgusted the great mass of the population, even in a country where morality did not assume the most rigid air; and a legacy of financial difficulties, left by Louis XIV. to his successor, and increased by the mismanagement of various scheming financiers, had irritated all classes against a government daily forced to inflict new burdens, and made the people look round on every side for aid and relief. In the month of May an edict regarding the currency, which was judged by the parliament, the principal mercantile bodies and great bankers, to be highly dangerous and prejudicial, afforded a subject of remonstrance, which was rejected with haughty indignation by the court. The parliament, which had issued a decree upon the subject, and which decree had been annulled by the council of regency, made a strong manifestation of adhering to its resolutions; and at that moment the memoirs of the cardinal de Retz appearing

for the first time, laid before the public and the parliament a scheme of turbulent opposition to the government, which was immediately imitated. It was but an imitation, however, wanting all the energy of an original movement. Nevertheless, it was a preparation for any one who chose to inspire the opposition with a new spirit, and the agents of Alberoni were not wanting in exertion.

Many of the provinces showed a still more vehement opposition to the court and its representatives than the capital, and day by day the discontent of all parties increased. The proceedings of the parliament, which we have noticed in another place, drove the regent to extremity, and he determined upon an act of vigour which was destined to put an end to the immediate opposition of the great body of the law; but which raised up against him several redoubtable enemies. It was determined to summon the parliament to the Tuileries, and having prepared every thing beforehand, to cause the young king to hold what was called a bed of justice; in which the duke of Maine should be deprived of all the peculiar privileges that had been granted to him by the late king, and stripped of his post of superintendent of the education of Louis XV. Accordingly, the bed of justice was held; a great military force had been prepared; the parliament was suddenly summoned to the palace, and its members found every thing ready to overawe opposition, should it be attempted.

The intentions of the regent and his council had been kept secret; but he had suffered enough to transpire, in an ambiguous manner, to alarm the malecontents for their personal safety: the imposing force which had been collected, the pomp and display of royalty, the uncertainty of what every moment was to produce, had all worked an extraordinary effect; and we are told by Duclos, that that parliament which but a few days before had determined upon the most vigorous measures was now struck with consternation, which had spread to the breast of every member, from the

duke of Maine to the lowest usher. A number of the members had deserted the procession as it advanced to the palace ; and one of the most famous demagogues fainted on the stairs of the Tuileries, and was carried away to his house in a condition equally pitiable and contemptible. In this state of preparation the decrees of the council of regency were proposed to the parliament, and the only opposition that was made was the request of the principal president, that that body might deliberate upon them ; upon which the keeper of the seals replied, " that the king would be obeyed, and obeyed upon the spot."

Thus passed the bed of justice, leaving several persons, but more particularly the duke of Maine, furious against the regent and his party. The agents of Alberoni did not fail to seize this moment. The jesuits and the jansenists, equally offended by the conduct of the court, were ready to join with the oppressed parliament and the furious duke of Maine ; and there began to be circulated amongst the malecontents the first sketches of a plan which might have been arranged so as to bind them all together in one common purpose, and give them one common head. The opinion became general throughout a great part of France, that nothing could save the country but the removal of the duke of Orleans from the regency, and an appeal to the king of Spain to take that high office on himself.

The claim of Philip V. to the regency, had he not been king of Spain, would have been, doubtless, better than that of the duke of Orleans. All the devoted adherents of the old court, who carried their ideas of etiquette into every branch of policy, still regarded him as the rightful regent ; and St. Simon himself, witty, talented, and clear-sighted as he was, acknowledged to the duke of Orleans, that were the king of Spain to present himself, and demand the high post to which he was entitled, he, St. Simon, would be one of the first to acknowledge him. In his voice spoke a large portion of the French nobility ; and a still larger portion was driven over to

the cause of Philip by the deviation of the duke of Orleans from all the fundamental rules of policy inculcated during the last reign. England had ever been said to be the natural enemy of France. The policy of the court of Versailles had been for the last twenty years to place upon, and support in, the throne of Spain a Bourbon monarch, to increase his power, to extend his dominions, and to depress the house of Austria.

The regent, however, had opened a new course of policy. He had allied himself with England to depress the kindred house of Spain, and to raise up and strengthen the long adverse house of Austria. The wisdom of this proceeding was doubtful to the whole world, and its justice was impeached by far more than one half of the French nation. A feeling of deep sympathy was raised up in favour of a monarch, whom the people considered ill-treated without cause; and amongst those who showed the most determined opposition to the policy of the regent were many of the most distinguished soldiers in France, headed by the celebrated Villars, whose talents had been the prop and support of France during the declining years of Louis XIV. The sentiments of these persons were not at all concealed, and a general outcry was raised against the league with England.

While such public demonstrations of discontent, however, gave notice to the regent, that his government was becoming day by day more unpopular, the intrigues of Alberoni were weaving for him a net, from which he might have found it difficult to escape. The duchess of Maine, by no means without talents, and animated with strong passions, and a restless, enterprising spirit, had entered long before into secret communications with Cellamar, the Spanish ambassador, and through him, with the queen of Spain herself; and now, driven to the fury of despair by the severe conduct of the regent, she plunged with more eagerness than ever into the designs of Alberoni, and brought with her a large body of nobles, attached by different ties to her house and family. A regular conspiracy was then framed for the

purpose of seizing upon the person of the regent, of raising the whole of France in favour of the king of Spain, and overturning every branch of the existing government. A force of discontented and exiled French was gathered together in the peninsula, and a multitude of others had been induced formally to give in their adhesion to the designs of Alberoni; while manifestos and addresses of every different kind were prepared for circulation amongst the people, and for presentation to the parliament and the states general.

The necessary precautions, however, for carrying on such an intrigue had not been taken by the prince of Cellamar. His house was known as the rendezvous of the disaffected, and the very airs of mystery which he assumed, in transactions that otherwise might have passed unnoticed, called the attention of the government. At the same time the indiscretion of the ambassador was imitated and surpassed by his agents. Rumours of the conspiracy got abroad both in London and in Madrid; and notification thereof was conveyed to the regent, who, though not without considerable apprehensions, suffered the intrigue to proceed without taking the slightest notice, till the whole plans of the conspirators were mature. Before he would suffer the last stroke to be struck, Alberoni required to be made acquainted with the precise situation of affairs, and with the number and names of those who had pledged themselves to the cause of Philip.

The document destined to convey to him this information was certainly of a nature, which, in common consideration for those whose safety it involved, should have been forwarded by the most discreet messenger, and should have been written in a cipher of so intricate a character, as to render the discovery of its contents, if not impossible, at least a work of so much time as to give opportunity for any counter-measures which might be rendered necessary. Instead of this, the letters were written in the ordinary manner, by young and careless secretaries, and the bearer selected was the young abbé

Portocarero, nephew of the cardinal of that name. When the despatches were all prepared, the young abbé set out, accompanied by a friend, for the Spanish capital ; but the secret of their mission was betrayed to the regent, though in what manner there is some doubt. We shall relate the story, in the first place, nearly in the words of Duclos. There was at that time in Paris a celebrated procuress of the name of Lafillon, who was very well known to the minister Dubois ; she appeared, even, occasionally at the audiences of the regent, and was not at all worse received there than other people. One of the secretaries of prince Cellamar having agreed to be at her house at a certain hour, and having been later than his appointment, alleged as his excuse to the person he came to meet, that he had been detained writing despatches of great importance for the abbé Portocarero, who had just set out for Spain. Lafillon overheard the conversation, and hastened away with the tidings to her friend Dubois. The other statement, which is more probable, imports that the secret was divulged by one of the copyists of Cellamar.

Immediate measures were taken for the arrest of the messengers, and the packet, with all its contents, fell into the hands of Dubois. The next day Cellamar was arrested, and placed under the charge of one of the gentlemen in ordinary to the king. The duke and duchess of Maine, and a very great number of the nobility, were likewise arrested, and an immediate breach of all the relations between France and Spain ensued. The duke of St. Aignan contrived, though with some risk, to effect his retreat out of Spain, and Cellamar was then allowed to return to his own country.

Alberoni, on the part of Philip, made no attempt whatever to deny the conspiracy, or to conceal the source whence it had originated. Cellamar was justified in all his proceedings by his royal master ; and Philip published a manifesto, which was widely circulated throughout France, expressing his affection and regard for the French people, and declaring that

his hostile preparations, as well as the intrigues of his ambassador, had been solely directed to deliver France from the government of the duke of Orleans. This conduct at once determined the regent upon a step at which he had long hesitated, and which he probably never would have taken, had not this unfortunate conspiracy of Alberoni exasperated him to the highest degree of which his natural good temper was capable, and rendered an immediate rupture with Spain a necessary consequence of the line of policy in which he was engaged.

If, instead of employing every means to annoy the regent, to embarrass his measures, and ultimately overthrow his power, Alberoni had attempted to conciliate that prince, had striven to unite, rather than to separate, the two Bourbon courts, and while he showed himself firm in maintaining the interests of Spain, had displayed every sort of goodwill towards France, his vast designs upon Italy would, in all probability, have been accomplished; his activity and energy, directed to one grand object, might have been crowned with success; his measures for the restoration of industry amongst the people, and regularity in the finances of Spain, might have had time to have become mature and produced fruit, and his name might have descended to posterity as one of the greatest ministers that ever lived. Nevertheless, while we blame his conduct towards France, as amongst the greatest political errors that could be committed, we must remember that he was urged on by all the passions and prejudices of his master; passions and prejudices, on humouring which depended his grasp of power. The facility with which both Philip and the queen yielded him who had so long been their favourite evinced how slight was his hold of their affections; and would seem to prove that his authority solely sprang from the hopes with which his talents inspired Philip, of prosecuting that monarch's own schemes to a successful conclusion.

Misfortunes, however, were now gathering fast round

Alberoni. The failure of his plot against the regent was scarcely known in Madrid, when his hopes of effecting a diversion in favour of Spain, by the league he had established in the north, were put an end to for ever by the death of Charles XII. of Sweden. Some time before, the duke of Savoy also had publicly given in his adhesion to the quadruple alliance, and had commanded the Savoyard troops in Sicily to deliver up all the strong places which they held, on the summons of the imperial forces. England was busily fitting out armaments to carry the war into the American possessions of Spain, and the regent rapidly prepared troops to follow up with active measures his declaration of hostilities. Thus ended the year 1718.

The new year commenced with operations on the part of Spain, for taking a step, which, had it been adopted sooner, or, perhaps, even then executed with prompt rapidity, might have been attended with success. Philip depended still upon the love of the French people for his person, upon the attachment of a great body of the nobility, and of the army, to the political system of Louis XIV., and upon the hatred and contempt with which the government of the duke of Orleans was regarded by all who held virtue, and even decency, in esteem; and he determined to take advantage of all these circumstances, in his favour, to march into France, to claim the regency, and by arms, should it be necessary, to oppose the authority of the duke of Orleans. With a great minded, energetic, and determined sovereign, such a scheme might have been successful. The army was most decidedly in his favour: marshal Villars had publicly declared, that he would lead no force against the grandson of Louis XIV.; and the example of the most celebrated and best loved general in the service was likely to have a great effect upon all its inferior branches.

It is by no means impossible, then, that had Philip advanced at once into France the moment that the conspiracy of Cellamar was detected, with all the specious declarations which had been prepared beforehand of

affection for the French people, of designs solely for its interest, and enmity towards none but the duke of Orleans, it is not at all impossible, that by far the greater part of the army would have gone over at once to the grandson of their late monarch ; that all who were in any degree implicated in the late conspiracy would have fled to Philip for protection ; that many of the most influential nobles, such as St. Simon, Villars, Villeroy, and others, would have openly declared in his favour ; that the creatures of the duke of Orleans's will, the ministers of his pleasure, and the companions of his debaucheries, would have fled from him to a man ; and that the rest of the nation would have remained inactive or neuter, till Philip had seized the power at which he aspired. Nor must we ever forget that the banking system of the famous Law had placed the resources of the country in such a state, that the entry of the king of Spain into France might, in one moment, have overturned the credit of the existing government, and have produced a scene of financial confusion the most favourable for his views.

Nothing, however, was prepared in Spain to take advantage of the moment, or to recover what had been lost by the detection of Cellamar's conspiracy. Not above 4000 or 5000 men could have been mustered to accompany the monarch at once into France. Alberoni was unwilling to encounter the responsibility of suffering him to make the attempt without a stronger force ; Philip himself believed that it might be accomplished in the spring, when more troops could be collected ; and thus the precious moment was suffered to escape, and time was given to the regent to make all his preparations for attack, or for resistance. Under the circumstances in which he was placed, the duke of Orleans made no appeal to Villars, or to any of those officers, whose attachment to the old court was a matter of principle as well as of feeling. He addressed himself to one in whose eyes he knew the duty of a soldier was paramount to every other consideration : and whose feelings, though strongly affected,

both by the situation of France, and his own peculiar position, were sure to give way to his principles. This was the marshal duke of Berwick, an officer highly distinguished for his military talents and successes, loved by the soldiery, and capable, by the mixture of justice, kindness, and rigid discipline, which had always characterised him in command, of restraining every thing like disaffection in the ranks of the army.

Berwick was at that time commandant in Guienne ; and it so luckily happened, that the person of all others whom the regent would have chosen to lead the forces of France against Spain was the one whose situation pointed him out naturally for that office. The only impediment that could have arisen was the duke's personal attachment to the king of Spain. He had served with him, and for him ; had been amply rewarded ; created a grandee of the first class ; received the order of the Golden Fleece ; and had at that very time a son high in the service and favour of the Spanish monarch. But the duke of Orleans had not calculated upon his principles wrongly. The duke, immediately on receiving orders to attack Spain, prepared to obey, sent back the order of the Golden Fleece to Philip, and wrote to his son, commanding him to cast away all consideration of opposing his father, and to do his duty to the monarch he served, as his father would do his in similar circumstances.

In the mean while, Alberoni was exerting himself, most strenuously, to prepare a force for opposing that which now threatened the frontier of Spain ; but all that his utmost exertions could produce amounted to no more than 15,000 men ; nor was this army in any degree sufficient to encounter that with which, in the beginning of the year, the duke of Berwick passed the Spanish frontier. The first place that fell into the hands of France was Port Passages — more important on account of the naval preparations that were there going on than from its own strength. Here a number of vessels were destroyed, and a vast quantity of stores was taken. The next place attacked was Fontarabia, against which the trenches were opened

on the 27th of May, and the siege went on with incessant activity. In the mean while, the small army of Spain had advanced from Madrid in three divisions; the first commanded by Philip in person; the second accompanied by the queen; and the third led by Alberoni. All these united at Pampeluna; and although the army besieging Fontarabia amounted to 30,000 men, and that of Philip to not one half the number, he eagerly proposed to push forward for the relief of the besieged city. Alberoni, however, strongly opposed his desire, showing him the improbability of success, and the necessity of maintaining such a force in the field as would render the siege of so strong a city as Pampeluna dangerous to the French general.

Philip's reliance, however, on the affection of the French soldiery still continued: he published manifesto after manifesto, in order to induce them to desert and join his standard; and he even proposed to go with a small escort, and, casting himself into the midst of the French army, appeal to their fidelity towards the blood of Louis XIV. From this Alberoni likewise dissuaded him as an act of absolute madness; of which truth, the little effect of all his manifestos should have already convinced the king. The monarch then returned to his original proposal, and, notwithstanding all opposition, marched to San Estovan and to Lessaca, two leagues and a half from Irun. He reached that place on the 17th of June; but the news there met him, that Fontarabia had capitulated, upon which intelligence he immediately retired to Pampeluna.* The next place of importance which was attacked was St. Sebastian, which surrendered after a protracted siege; and several other movements having taken place, all showing more and more the superiority of the French arms, Philip, unable to oppose the enemy, returned to Madrid, disgusted with his own situation, with his minister, and with his generals.

* Coxe states that the king of Spain was prevented, by Alberoni's remonstrances, from attempting the relief of Fontarabia; but the facts, as stated in the text, are proved by the Memoirs of Marshal Berwick, vol. ii. p. 303.

In the mean time, however, a transient success had taken place in Sicily, and served in some degree to support the failing credit of Alberoni. General Merci had landed on the island with a large imperial force, and after some slight successes, had pursued the Spanish army from Melazzo, which the latter had been besieging. He overtook them in the neighbourhood of Franca Villa; and a general engagement took place, in which the Spaniards completely defeated the imperial troops, who sustained a loss, we are told, of 5000 men. Merci himself was severely wounded in the action; but neither this defeat, nor the temporary loss of that general's services, prevented the imperialists from gaining, day by day, something more in Sicily. Fresh reinforcements were daily brought to their power, by the indefatigable exertions of the English fleet; while Spain, whose navy had been destroyed, both on the seas and in the harbours, could only convey very inefficient reinforcements or supplies to the gallant troops who maintained her cause so nobly in that remote spot.

Had it been otherwise, however, and had the victory of the Spaniards at Franca Villa been any thing more important than a mere temporary gleam of success, the failure of Alberoni's last scheme for diverting the forces of England from a distant war, to maintain the existing dynasty at home, would have far more than counterbalanced the advantage gained. It would appear that, according to the promises he had made in the negotiations between Spain, Russia, and Sweden, Alberoni had invited the unfortunate head of the house of Stuart to the court of Madrid, in order to concert measures for the invasion of these realms. Struggling up with determined energy against misfortune, the Spanish minister would not give up the scheme, although the death of Charles XII. deprived him of the co-operation of the northern powers; and though Spain, assailed in every quarter, required the concentration of her forces for the defence of her own dominions. The hopes of the rejected claimant of the crown of England were still strong;

that a considerable party espoused his cause in Great Britain was indubitable ; and Monteleone, the Spanish ambassador in London, had magnified both the number and the influence of the malecontents.

Alberoni, it would appear, in endeavouring to create revolutions in other countries, always fell into the error of trusting, that fear, apathy, and indolence, would diminish the number of opponents to his schemes, without calculating the loss which his own party would sustain from the same causes ; and without considering, that in all cases of faction or conspiracy, the want of a recognised and supreme authority generates petty quarrels, jealousies, and disputes, which are often more detrimental than open defalcation. The number of 3000 men, which was all that he could afford to place at the disposal of the pretender, was calculated to effect nothing in England, without the strenuous co-operation of a large body of the British people ; but that co-operation Alberoni flattered himself that he should obtain ; and early in the year 1719 a squadron of six ships of the line, supplied with arms for 30,000 men, sailed from Cadiz, for the invasion of England. Scarcely had the squadron left the port, however, when a tremendous storm dispersed it, and wrecked several of the vessels ; and of the whole number, only two frigates, with 300 men and 2000 stand of arms, reached the shores of Great Britain.

Such an insignificant force was in no degree sufficient to justify any, but the rashest partisans of the Stuart cause, in once more raising the standard of revolt against the existing dynasty. A few of the most determined of the Highland clans joined the handful of Spaniards, and commenced their advance in hopes of raising the country as they went along. Immense preparations had been made by the government, however : Dutch, French, and imperial forces had been called to the aid of the house of Hanover, and means were ready for opposing a more formidable invasion than Spain had even hoped to effect. That which had taken place, however, was rendered ineffectual with the exertion of

much less power. The British troops at Inverness met the Highland and Spanish force in its advance ; encountered and defeated it at Glenshiels. The Spaniards surrendered the next day, and the Highlanders betook themselves to their mountains.

Such was the last effort of Alberoni against Great Britain ; and in the mean while, squadrons of British men-of-war ravaged the Spanish coast. Each misfortune added something to the rapidity with which Alberoni was descending in his royal master's estimation. France and England declared that they would never make peace with Spain until the dismissal of Alberoni insured them against a speedy renewal of the war ; the Dutch joined the quadruple alliance, in spite of all the Spanish minister's efforts to prevent them ; and the cardinal perceived that nothing but the immediate conclusion of a treaty of peace, proposed and carried through by himself, could save him or Spain from the combined powers of all the greater European courts. All those courts, however, feared him : their conviction of his great abilities, their apprehension of his vast and daring schemes, is visible in all their despatches, and in all their negotiations. It was not alone that Austria and England, as some people have supposed, covered their enmity to a Bourbon king of Spain by affecting a personal hatred of the minister ; but, as appears from lord Stanhope's own letters, it was real apprehension of Alberoni himself, dread of what his daring ambition might undertake, and what his fertility of resources might give him power to effect, which united the efforts of England and France against the person of one man.

Not contented with public demonstrations of their enmity, however, those two nations employed the secret means of low intrigue to effect his fall. The famous lord Peterborough, under the direction of the regent of France, proceeded to the court of Parma, and negotiated with the duke of that petty state the terms on which he would use his influence with his niece, the queen of Spain, to give her all-powerful aid in

removing Alberoni from the councils of Philip. The duke, apprehensive of the effects of a war in Italy, and jealous of the rise of one who had been amongst the lowest of his subjects, to a situation which rendered him his master, offended, too, we are told, by various acts of ostentation on the part of Alberoni, willingly entered into the views of England and France.

The marquis of Scotti, who had been agent for Parma at the court of Madrid, but had lately been employed on various other transactions, was now commanded by the duke of Parma to return to the Spanish capital, and effect the ruin of Alberoni in the mind of the queen. Fifty thousand crowns were given to the envoy to stimulate his exertions, or to facilitate his operations; and he accordingly set out instantly for Madrid, where he found the transaction which he came to complete in a much better state of preparation than he expected. The *assa feta*, or first woman of the bed-chamber to the queen, had formerly been her nurse, and was, like Alberoni, sprung from the lowest class of the Parmesan people. In common with most of the low Italians, she possessed a good deal of shrewdness, and a great deal of humour; and though her own rise was scarcely less extraordinary than that of the minister, she regarded him, it would seem, with as much jealousy and contempt, on account of his power and his origin, as he regarded her with apprehension and dislike, on account of her influence with the queen. Her name was Laura Pescatori; and it used to be her amusement to detail to the queen at night all the pasquinades, and sing all the satirical songs, composed in the Spanish capital, upon the person and government of the cardinal. Thus, to use the words of Mr. Coxe, "the power of ridicule had already associated the person and character of the minister with ideas of contempt" in the mind of the queen; and it wanted but little to obliterate the memory of past services, and render her attentive alone to the appeal of present interests.

With the king Alberoni's favour had still farther de-

clined. He had committed the greatest fault that a minister can commit in the eyes of a weak monarch—he had not been successful; and although the fault might, and probably did, lie more with the sovereign than with his minister, that did not render Philip less angry, or less disappointed. The very opposition to his wildest schemes, which had been shown by Alberoni during the unfortunate campaign of Navarre, had irritated the monarch against him. His confessor, Daubenton, seduced by the duke of Orleans, and exasperated against Alberoni for endeavouring to displace him, took advantage of every opportunity to injure the falling minister in the opinion of his master. Several other persons of the court combined to pour into the ear of Philip all the many accusations which were current against the cardinal; and the famous Ripperda, who had aided in his rise, now contributed, as far as possible, to work his downfall.

Such were the efforts in progress against Alberoni, when the marquis Scotti arrived in Madrid. He found some difficulty, however, in fulfilling his mission; for the cardinal, knowing that the duration of his authority depended upon the queen alone, took every precaution to exclude from her society all persons who might influence her against him; but Scotti, well-aware of the peculiar position of the various persons of the court, made his application to Laura Pescatori, and through her influence, which was gained, it is said, by presents of no slight value, he speedily obtained a private audience of the queen. That princess retained for her uncle a great share of the respect and submission which had been inculcated upon her during her youth; and she listened to his remonstrances and advice regarding Alberoni with deference and attention. Scotti represented to her that the welfare of Spain, the peace of Europe, and the honour of her husband, all required the dismissal of a minister who had plunged him into a needless and unsuccessful war; who had made enemies of his friends, and who had even broken the ties of relationship subsisting between the two branches of the Bourbon race.

We know not whether the queen defended the obnoxious minister ; whether she pointed out that the war was not of Alberoni's seeking ; whether she showed that her husband's precipitate passions and haughty prejudices had compelled the cardinal to undertake enterprises prematurely, which even his genius could not render successful, destitute as he was, at their commencement, of the means of carrying them through with vigour — all we know is, that she consented to his downfall, and made herself a party to the general scheme for casting the whole blame of the recent events upon him whom she had agreed to sacrifice.

The after arrangements of Alberoni's enemies were conducted so secretly, that, notwithstanding all his vigilance, he was perfectly unprepared for the impending blow. On the evening of the 4th of December he, as usual, transacted business with the king, dictated absolutely in the royal councils, and conferred for some time with Scotti, the Parmesan envoy, upon various measures to be taken. No frown upon the royal brow announced to the falling minister his master's determination ; no sneer upon the lip of the inferior agent betrayed to him he had overthrown the secret of approaching disgrace. The courtly virtue, hypocrisy, was complete in its triumph ; and Alberoni slept secure, while the decree was prepared for removing him from power in Spain for ever. On the 5th, in the morning, the king left Madrid for one of his numerous palaces in the neighbourhood ; and shortly after, the marquis of Tolosa transmitted to Alberoni a royal decree, depriving him of all his posts, and enjoining him to quit Madrid within eight days, and the Spanish territory in one-and-twenty.

Though astounded by such an unexpected blow, the cardinal strove to gain time, and demanded eagerly to be permitted to see the king or queen ; this, however, was refused him : and he was ordered not to attempt to present himself before either of their majesties during the remainder of his stay in Spain. He was permitted to write, however, but the letter produced no effect ;

and, finding that any farther efforts would be vain, he prepared, unwillingly, to obey. Before he quitted the Spanish capital, however, one of the most extraordinary, and to him the most gratifying, changes of public feeling took place that is recorded in history. From the first to the last of his administration, he had been the object of party hatred, of libel, pasquinade, and abuse. His person, his morals, his talents, his origin, his plans, and his purposes, had all been assailed with the most acrimonious virulence; he had been held up to public scorn, hatred, and derision. The *grandees* had despised the upstart; the clergy had detested him who wrung from them a part of their wealth; the people had hooted the mean-looking and dwarfish foreigner; and all had railed at the minister and the favourite. But when the tidings of his disgrace were spread through the capital, and those who had worked his fall laboured to attribute to him all the evils and misfortunes that had occurred, the sense of justice began to awaken throughout the land; men began to ask themselves what minister had ever done so much for Spain as Alberoni? what favourite that so little misused the authority of his master? what financier had ever shown so completely the great resources of the Spanish monarchy? what politician had ever made a stand, with such small means and general difficulties, against all the great powers of Europe, leagued together for his ruin? Every Spaniard, as he asked himself these questions, answered, "None!" They became convinced that he had struggled nobly for the cause of Spain; they turned their steps towards his dwelling; and, during the last days of his stay, the halls of the fallen and banished minister were crowded with the noble and the great; the clergy, the nobility, the gentry of the land, flocked in to offer him sympathy in his misfortunes, and a testimony of respect in the hour of his downfall.

The tidings of this fact reached the ears of the king, but it produced no other effect than an order for Alberoni to hasten his departure. The time allowed for his stay

was abridged by a day ; and on the 12th of December he quitted the Spanish capital, never to return. He took his way through Arragon, towards Catalonia ; but he was destined to meet with more than one interruption. At Lerida, he was overtaken by an officer despatched from Madrid, to search his baggage for various papers, said to have been taken from the secretary of state's office. The man treated him with indignity and insult ; and, pursuing his search, found several documents of no great importance to the state, which Alberoni avers he had taken away, with many others, as absolutely necessary to that justification of his conduct in the eyes of the world, which he had already determined to draw up. Amongst other things found, was a bill of exchange for 25,000 crowns ; and on some questions being asked concerning it, he tore it indignantly to pieces in the officer's presence.

He then pursued his journey, and passing through Barcelona, towards the French frontier, he was attacked by a party of plundering Miquelets ; but, putting himself at the head of his servants, and assisted by a small escort which had been given to him, he forced his way onward, and reached the frontier in safety.* At the French outposts, he obtained a passport from the regent, in order to traverse a part of Languedoc and Provence, on his way to Italy. But, at the same time, a personage named the chevalier de Marcieu was appointed to accompany him—an honour which Alberoni would very willingly have dispensed with. It was not without its purpose, however ; for it would seem that the regent, trusting to the fallen minister's irritation to throw him off his guard, had commissioned De Marcieu to gain from him all the private information that he could, regarding both the events which had lately taken

* There are very different accounts of this adventure. Some assert, that, after killing one of his servants and a soldier of the escort, the Miquelets got possession of his baggage, while he himself made his escape to Girona, on foot and in disguise. But this account can scarcely be accurate, as we find that his baggage was searched at Narbonne, after his entry into France.

place and the secret views and purposes of the court of Madrid.

Alberoni, however, was too old a diplomatist to suffer his wrath to affect his judgment. He neither spared the king nor the queen of Spain, it is true; calling the former an uxorious bigot, who wanted nothing on earth but a wife and a prayer-book, and stigmatising the queen as a complete firebrand, who, if she had her will, would set all the powers of Europe at variance with each other. A number of other particulars are added by the French historians, respecting the conversations of Alberoni with De Marcieu, of no great importance, if we except the acknowledgment of Duclos, that Alberoni declared he would never name his partisans in France; which may be received as sufficient contradiction to the charge, that he offered to give a list of them to the regent. At Narbonne, De Marcieu, in the hopes of making some farther discoveries, caused the officers of the custom-house to examine rigidly the baggage of the cardinal, upon the pretence of seeking for contraband goods. Nothing was found, however, but 1200 pistoles, without any jewels of value.

On the 1st of February, Alberoni embarked in a Genoese vessel, and steered for the coast of Italy. He landed a few days after at Sestri; but here he was met by a letter from the principal secretary of state, forbidding him from entering the ecclesiastical territory upon pain of imprisonment. Under these circumstances he applied, it would appear, to the Genoese republic, for permission to reside in their territories. But a persecution had already begun, which naturally originated with those he had offended, and was as naturally carried on and aggravated by those whom he had served, and who had recompensed his services with ingratitude. The pope, stimulated against him by the remonstrances of Philip, joined to those of Austria and France, instigated the Genoese senate to detain him upon various charges, imputing to him a criminal

dereliction from the catholic faith. These charges were, that he had made use of the money granted by the pope upon the ecclesiastical property in Spain ; that he had acted against the emperor whilst making war upon the Mahommedans, and had thus shown favour to the infidels ; and that he had prohibited Spanish subjects from making the usual application for papal bulls, in regard to the benefices conferred by the pope. It needed but little deliberation, however, to induce the Genoese senate to dismiss these charges as not within their cognisance, and to give Alberoni his liberty ; but it was not to be expected that so insignificant a state should draw upon itself the enmity of the most formidable powers in Europe, in defence of the persecuted minister of Spain. The republic of Genoa refused the permission to reside which he demanded, and he was obliged to set out once more to hide himself from the fury of his enemies.

The French writers declare that he now obtained an asylum at the court of Parma, and that he was treated with all the honours due to the Roman purple. Such, however, we know not to be the fact ; and we learn that, after proceeding from Sestri to Spezzia, he crossed the Apeninnes, and entered the Modenese ; that he thence proceeded to Lucarno, so completely disguised as to have left no trace whatever of his journey, nor of his intervening occupations, till we find him, at very nearly the end of a year, protected by the government of Coire against the efforts of some people who had attempted to seize upon his person. By that government he was removed to a castle in the heart of the Alps, where every precaution was taken to render his residence comfortable, and to guard him against surprise.

He here resided about a year, till the death of Clement XI. removed one of his bitterest enemies ; but, during the time which had intervened between his disappearance in Italy and the decease of the pontiff, machinations had been going on against him, which, in

writing his life, we are bound to notice. No sooner had he been dismissed from the Spanish court, than his ungrateful master, eager to cast off the shame of being compelled to yield a minister who had served him so well, pretended to have discovered the real character of Alberoni, affected to lament that he had yielded to his ascendancy, and charged him with a thousand crimes and follies, which even his ancient enemies did not believe. Every ambitious and evil design under which Spain was suffering was attributed to him; he had, unauthorised, made use of the king's name for his own purposes; he had deceived the monarch with forged letters and despatches; he had employed a secretary endued with the almost miraculous power of imitating every hand; and, though there was no proof that he had either poisoned or assassinated any one, yet such crimes were by no means too black for his dark and horrible heart.

Such were the charges made against him by those whom he had served with zeal and fidelity, if not in all cases with wisdom and caution. Such is the baseness to which mortified vanity can descend, to cover its own debasement from the eyes of others. As a natural consequence of these charges, the king of Spain was obliged to join in the proceedings of the other powers against Alberoni; but he went farther, and, with a degree of hypocrisy so gross as to defeat itself, he besought his enemy, the king of England, to use every means with the regent of France and the emperor to induce the pope to degrade the fallen minister from the conclave, and doom him to perpetual imprisonment. While at Genoa, Alberoni, undismayed by the efforts of his enemies, published various papers in his own defence, boldly assailing those who accused him, and retorting upon them the charges which they had so basely brought against him. Amongst these papers was his celebrated apology, which is too long for insertion here; but the principal topics of which have been considered in our estimate of the various actions

detailed in his life. In none of these papers did he in any degree spare the character of the king or queen of Spain; representing him throughout as the author of the war, and of almost all the schemes, the wildness and difficulty of which had so frequently been brought as charges against his own political conduct. The queen he displayed in the light of an ambitious and intriguing woman; and the pope himself did not escape without an exposure of the part he had played in many of the late transactions.

He published also, at a later period, a general vindication of his administration. Such proceedings, of course, but tended to aggravate the wrath of his enemies. A feeble reply was published by the court of Spain, in answer to his apology; and no sooner had Clement XI. closed his eyes, than every exertion was made to prevent Alberoni from being admitted to the conclave summoned for the election of a new pope. The interest of all the cardinals, however, was too deeply involved in the question of his exclusion to allow them to agree to it; and, notwithstanding all the exertions of Spain, a safe-conduct was issued by the college of cardinals, and a citation in the regular form was affixed in the cathedral of Genoa, and the church of Sestri, as his last known place of residence. By the exertion of the friends who had kept the secret of his concealment so well, intimation was conveyed to him of the fact; and, travelling in the disguise of a layman, accompanied by a single servant, Alberoni made his way, by a route of which he left no trace, to Bologna.

At that city he again appeared in public; and the tidings of his entrance into the ecclesiastical states, and his approach to Rome, reached that city, and excited a degree of interest which he himself had not anticipated, and which was most mortifying to his enemies. He had given no intimation in regard to the day on which he was likely to make his entry into the city; but nevertheless crowds flocked to the gate through

which he was expected to appear ; and, though disappointed for several days, the multitude went on increasing, till, as we are told by a contemporary traveller, there was scarcely a person in the ancient queen of empires, from the highest to the lowest, who did not press forward to the gate. When at length he did appear, he was gratulated with every sign of respect and admiration ; and the people ran from street to street to see him pass, not satisfied with the view they had obtained of him at his entrance.

The cardinals, however, were not so well disposed towards him as the other inhabitants of the city, and efforts were still made by many to exclude him from the conclave. In this they were over-ruled by the majority ; but still, in their meetings, a number refused to hold any communication with him, till, gradually, his talents and popular manners overcame even their repugnance. The cardinal Conti showed himself more favourably disposed towards him ; and Alberoni is said to have assisted in raising him to the pontifical throne. It is probable, from all that pope's conduct, that as soon as he was seated there, under the title of Innocent XIII., he would have taken measures to absolve Alberoni of all the charges against him, had it not been for the strenuous efforts of Spain, Austria, and France ; which in a manner compelled him to suffer a commission of cardinals, appointed, I believe, by his predecessor Clement, to proceed in their investigation against the fallen minister of Spain. Many of those, whereof this commission was composed, may be supposed to have been prejudiced against Alberoni ; and although he defended himself with spirit and dignity, yet the trial ended in his condemnation, to three years' retirement in a monastery.

The pope immediately abridged the term to one year ; and in the end formally absolved him of all the charges against him, and invested him with the purple. He now established his residence in Rome, and lived there in comfort, though not, as has been asserted, with

any degree of ostentatious splendour. Every means, indeed, were taken by the enemies of Alberoni to calumniate his character, and to clothe in the form of insinuations those charges which they had not been able to substantiate openly. Reports were spread of his immense wealth, and of his having carried out of Spain a quantity of treasure, obtained by the most corrupt means. This statement, however, is directly contradicted by Polignac, the French minister at Rome, who represented Alberoni as living with modest economy, and in a state of what might be considered as poverty, when compared with the affluence of the other cardinals.

The various benefices which he enjoyed in Italy, the gratifications he had at different times received from the masters he had served, the long enjoyment of high posts and extensive church preferment in Spain, are quite sufficient to account for the means which he possessed of maintaining his dignity in Rome, without any great embarrassment. That there was little or no money found when his baggage was examined at Narbonne proves nothing on either side ; for it can be clearly shown that, on his dismissal from the Spanish ministry, he sent the greater part of his effects to Italy, by the way of Alicante ; and from the representations of Polignac, we have every reason to believe that, until his revenues were augmented from other sources, his mode of living in Rome was in no degree more splendid or ostentatious than it had been in Madrid after the death of Vendôme, ere he had been raised to the rank of a cardinal, or had become the minister of a powerful state.

The death of the regent duke of Orleans, which took place in July, 1723, delivered him from one of his fiercest persecutors ; and from that moment he was rather favoured than otherwise by the French government. Polignac evidently took a great deal of interest in the former minister of Spain ; and on the death of Innocent XIII. Alberoni created for himself a new and strenuous friend, by exerting himself vigorously and successfully to raise

cardinal Orsini to the papal chair. Under the title of Benedict XIII., that pontiff showed himself strongly favourable to Alberoni; and not only invested him in form with the see of Malaga, to which he had been formerly nominated, but made frequent applications to the king of Spain, to grant the cardinal the more substantial benefits of that preferment. Philip and the queen both resisted, however; but the resources of Alberoni were now increased, by receiving from the hands of his friend the pope the pension usually allotted to a cardinal, which had hitherto been withheld.

Neither did the cardinal Polignac cease his efforts to promote the interests of a man whom he justly looked upon as endowed with very great talents, and, perhaps, not unjustly considered as having suffered from the ingratitude of one monarch, and the pitiful apprehension of others. He exerted himself with energy to make the French court espouse his cause, and, perhaps, inspired the new counsellors of Louis XV. with some shame for the persecution which Alberoni had met with at the hands of France. At different times Alberoni obtained through him a donation of 10,000 crowns, and a pension of 17,000 livres. And it would appear that he was not without hopes, at one time, of regaining for him the favour of Philip, and restoring to Spain the only man who seemed likely to raise it up from the depressed state into which it was again sinking more deeply day by day.

As the first step to such a change, he applied for the post of Spanish ambassador at Rome, in favour of Alberoni; and his letters, about this time, bear the highest testimony to the upright integrity and honour of the fallen minister. While they give cause to believe, that the emperor himself had eagerly sought the assistance of Alberoni in his designs against Spain, and had offered him strong inducements to devote the powers of his genius to the service of the house of Austria, they show that he had rejected such overtures with firmness and perseverance,

and refused to employ those talents for the benefit of his ungrateful master's enemy, which he had so remarkably displayed in that master's behalf.

The efforts of the generous ambassador of France, however, were rendered nugatory by the somewhat pitiful exertions of the British cabinet, which paid to the abilities of the minister the high compliment of its persevering enmity, while it affected only to dread the restless spirit of an intriguing adventurer. One of the strongest proofs of Alberoni's remarkable genius may be derived from the terror which he inspired in all those who made him their enemy. The greatest nations in the world do not combine to destroy a man that they condemn; it is only when apprehension is joined to hatred that they use all their powers against a single individual. The government of Great Britain exerted itself to prevent Alberoni from recovering his influence in Spain, and also employed its efforts at the court of Parma to induce the duke to continue his opposition to that man whom he had aided to overthrow. The duke was by no means unwilling to follow the course pointed out to him, feeling, it would appear, a personal dislike to one who, perhaps, during the period of his power, had not treated with any great ceremony the petty potentate on whose territories he was born. During his life he continued to exclude Alberoni from Parma and Placentia; but at his death, when the infant don Carlos took possession of those duchies, in consequence of the treaty which had followed Alberoni's downfall, that prince received the former minister of Spain with kindness and distinction, and granted him permission to reside in his native city.

Alberoni there passed his time for some years in the calm enjoyment of literary pursuits. He founded, also, and endowed largely, a seminary at some little distance from the walls, and took much interest in the improvement of the town wherein he was born. During this period of his life he carried on a correspondence with many of the most celebrated literary men of Europe; and

the public, accustomed to look for great schemes and extraordinary efforts at his hands, continued for many years to attribute to him every wild plan of enterprise which was circulated in the world. Whether he did or did not amuse himself in forming such schemes, it is not possible to say ; but soon after pope Benedict XIV. had mounted the papal throne in 1740, that pontiff called him again into active life, by appointing him vice-legate of Romagna.

Taking up his dwelling at Ravenna, where his ascent to power may be supposed to have commenced, and occupying the very post of him who had first led him forward to greatness, Alberoni showed that he was still full of that busy and enterprising spirit which had ever distinguished him through life. The same active and energetic mind which had induced him to make such great efforts for raising up Spain from the state of depression into which she had been plunged, now taught him to conceive the magnificent project of changing the marshy and unwholesome neighbourhood of Ravenna into a more productive and salubrious district, and employing the torrents which, descending from the Apennines, often spread ruin and destruction around the city, for the purpose of opening a communication between it and the Adriatic. By the means of spacious and well constructed canals he drained the greater part of the marshes, and, confining the torrents Ronco and Montone by artificial means to a fixed bed, he delivered Ravenna from two great inconveniences under which it had laboured for many years.

The spirit of restless enterprise, on the other hand, displayed itself in an attempt equally unworthy and ridiculous. The small state of San Marino had maintained itself for many years as a republic, in the midst of the petty princes amongst whom Italy was divided, and surrounded by the territories of the Roman pontiffs. To overturn this form of government, to reduce the little republic under the dominion of the popes, became now the ambition of Alberoni's idleness. He had proceeded some

way in his schemes : a careless people and feeble magistracy seemed willing to let him have his way, when an accidental allusion to liberty in the mass suddenly awakened all the ancient enthusiasm of the people ; the schemes of the cardinal were overthrown in a moment ; and the pope, disavowing all his proceedings, added shame to disappointment.

After the period of his vice-legation, Alberoni once more retired to Placentia, and we next find him portrayed in his old age by one who witnessed his occupations, and dwelt somewhat minutely upon his habits and appearance at the time. Vast changes had come over the politics of Europe during the sixteen years which had elapsed between the dismissal of Alberoni from the government of Spain and the year 1746. At the latter date, the French and Spaniards, once more united, were making a strenuous effort to do that which Alberoni had himself proposed to do, and counteract the influence of the house of Austria in Italy. A combined army of French and Spanish troops maintained the city of Placentia against the forces of the house of Austria. The Germans, in their attack upon that place, had taken possession of the seminary of Alberoni near St. Lazaro ; and Alberoni himself, driven into the city, which was so crowded with troops and men as not to be able to afford convenient accommodation for one half of those that it contained, is thus depicted by one of the French officers, who saw him frequently * : —

“ He inhabited a single apartment, of which the whole furniture consisted of a bed, a table, and four chairs. Not being able to procure wood, he had cut down an apricot tree, growing in the court-yard of the house in which he lived, kindled a fire, and was cooking his scanty dinner with his own hands. He was then eighty, and extremely hearty for his age ; his manner was easy and lively ; he chiefly engrossed the whole conversation, talked with all the garrulity of

* Not having *Les Observations sur l'Italie*, from which this account is taken, I copy it verbatim from Coxe's *Memoirs of Spain*.

old age, and with a spirit rendered more interesting by his communications. He spoke promiscuously the French, Italian, or Spanish languages, according to the persons or the transactions forming the subject of his discourse. He expressed himself in these three languages with equal energy, and supported his reflections by occasional quotations from Tacitus in the original tongue. The campaigns of Vendôme, his own administration in Spain, the affairs of Europe at that period, were the favourite subjects of his conversation; and he was particularly fond of explaining his plan for the establishment of the pretender on the throne of Great Britain. The Spanish troops who defended Placentia treated cardinal Alberoni with the profoundest veneration. They recollected with transport how much Spain owed to his administration — an administration distinguished for the jealousy which united the principal powers of Europe against a man rendered formidable by the strength of his genius, the extent of his schemes, and the depth of his views."

The six succeeding years of his life he passed between Rome and Placentia, willingly receiving those who sought to see him, and displaying to his very last hour that equanimity and cheerfulness which is the greatest blessing that can attend old age. The busy activity of his mind, and the strange vicissitudes of his life, had but little impaired his mental powers, and in no degree deprived him of the capability of enjoying in his latter day those literary tastes with which his career began. Devotion, also, was added to calm and cheer the hours of age. We find that, even from the time at which he quitted Spain, his constant companion was a copy of Thomas-à-Kempis de Imitatione Christi; and that extraordinary and powerful work was noted throughout in the margins with the various events of his life, as he proceeded, showing that scarcely a day passed without his having looked into its pages.

At length, in the year 1752, at the age of eighty-eight, Alberoni died in Rome, leaving behind him a reputation regarding which there has been, perhaps,

more difference of opinion than has been felt in respect to that of any other statesman. Even within the present century, when the party prejudices and follies which affected the judgment of men regarding him in his own day have, in a great measure, passed away, the two most opposite opinions have been put forth respecting him that it is possible to conceive. Some have represented him as a man of the first-rate genius, of the most fascinating manners, of the most extensive views, of the greatest political skill, courage, constancy, and penetration. Others, on the contrary, have depicted him as a mere political adventurer, of the lowest and most despicable capacity, blinded by arrogance and a rash spirit of enterprise, equally unjust in his purposes, and incapable in their execution ; rash, imprudent, vain, and selfish.

It is true, that it does not always follow that those who obtain celebrity are in any degree deserving of it ; for the circumstances in which a man is placed very often create his fame more than his own actions. It seems to me, that one test which might be frequently applied to ascertain the degree of a man's genius would be, to inquire how far he had influenced the circumstances in which he was placed by nature, and how far those circumstances had influenced him ? The inquiry would certainly be a difficult one ; but, at the same time, a general view might often be obtained of the course of a man's life, though many of the minor points would still remain obscure. The mountains and valleys, which give the grand and general direction to a stream, may be laid down by a geographer although the slopes and the mole-hills which frequently turn it hither and thither cannot be distinctly traced.

In the outset of Alberoni's life, no circumstances could be apparently more unfavourable for the advancement of an ambitious spirit. That he met with those who were willing to cultivate his talents and to assist his efforts was certainly fortunate ; but he must have displayed those talents before any one attempted to cultivate them ;

he must have made extraordinary efforts, to derive so much benefit from the scanty means that were afforded. That he attracted the notice and engaged the regard of a celebrated jurisconsult and criminal judge in his own city, was certainly very favourable to his rise ; but Alberoni, the labouring gardener's son, could be no very ordinary person to attract such attention, and to obtain such esteem, in a place where his origin and progress were known to all. His introduction to the vice-legat of Romagna proceeded from the fact of his own character having influenced his own fate ; for had he not boldly determined to follow his friend and protector into banishment, his introduction to Barni would never have taken place. The favour which he acquired with Vendôme is less attributable to merit than any other step in his progress ; but to maintain that favour, and to raise himself from the buffoon to the friend and confidant, higher qualities must have been displayed.

His advancement at the court of Spain marks also the man influencing the circumstances in which he is placed, more than being influenced by them. We find him seeking out the talented and the wise, discovering the abilities of Macañaz, and making a friend of Ripperda, directing the proceedings of the shrewd and clear-sighted Orsini to his own purposes, and obtaining, in the midst of the most jealous suspicions, the confidence of the monarch whom he sought to rule. After he obtained the authority for which he strove, however, his great struggle with circumstances really began ; for it was much more probable and easy for him to rise from his original condition to the height he obtained, than to raise up Spain from the state of profound lassitude and depression into which she had fallen, and give her back her station amongst nations. To do so was evidently the object of all the efforts of his internal policy, and the very purpose was one which could not have been grasped by a petty mind.

No circumstances, however, could be more adverse than those which surrounded him on his entrance into

power, and which attended every step of his career as a minister. He found a country which had been declining rapidly for two centuries plunged into greater embarrassments than ever by a long civil war; he found commerce and manufactures almost extinct; agriculture only followed as far as was absolutely necessary to the support of life; a population exhausted by a thousand drains, and divided amongst the idle by habit, and the idle by class; a vicious system of finance, a still more vicious system of administration; corruption in every branch of government; a total want of funds in the royal treasury; a court jealous of foreign influence; a fiery and ambitious queen, and a weak monarch, indolent, obstinate, and aspiring.

Such were some of the internal difficulties which Alberoni had to contend against in all his efforts for Spain; but the external circumstances of her situation were not less unfavourable to the efforts of a Spanish minister. The treaty of Utrecht had left every state of Europe in an unnatural position. England had been brought into close alliance with the nation which she had been successfully opposing for so many years, and, at the end of a long and desolating war, had, with triumphant arms, resigned all the fruits of her conquests. France, after seating one of her own children on the throne of Spain, had been compelled to use all her influence and authority, to threaten, to protest, and to intrigue, for the purpose of inducing that monarchy to resign its interests and its right, and to abandon possessions, to gain and maintain which she had been contending for centuries. Austria was indebted to France and England for territories which had been dissevered from Spain; and Spain, compelled unwillingly to bow the head, saw around her not one power on whom she could rely for protection or support. To complicate the whole, the death of Louis XIV. gave to the king of Spain a claim to the temporary government of France, while his will, and still more, the decision of

the parliament of Paris, placed the sovereign authority in the hands of another.

Under such circumstances, the only hope of a Spanish minister must have been to preserve the kingdom in tranquillity for some years, while his own efforts and the effects of time restored the exhausted resources of the country on the one hand, and while natural causes, on the other, dissolved the ties which bound together so many discrepant parts as were presented by the existing relations of all the other states of Europe. That such was Alberoni's design there can be very little doubt. His apology, his letter to the duke of Popoli, his conversations with all the English ambassadors at Madrid, show it clearly to have been so ; and had it been alone the internal difficulties of Spain, and the embarrassing complication of European policy at the moment, that he had to contend with, it is probable that his genius would, in that case, have affected external circumstances as much as it did in most others.

But there were peculiarities in his situation over which he did not, and perhaps could not, triumph. The combination of weakness, obstinacy, and ambition, in the character of Philip, stimulated by the covetous and daring character of the queen, hurried him rashly, and yet pertinaciously, on to those very measures which a wise minister could have wished to avoid. To resist the king's desires was certainly within the power of Alberoni ; but his authority, on the contrary, solely depended upon his gratifying them ; and it seems to me, that any one who considers the character of Philip, and the state of Spain, must come to the conclusion that Alberoni had but one choice—to be an imprudent minister, or to be no minister at all. Herein he yielded to circumstances, and lost that character for greatness which he would justly have deserved, had he, on the king's determination to plunge into war, resigned the authority which he was not permitted to exercise for the benefit of the country.

Having chosen his part, however, and having resolved to make one of those sad sacrifices to ambition which so often degrade the character of men who otherwise would have been great, his genius displayed itself again in triumphing over circumstances; and, with an exhausted monarchy, an inimical court, a turbulent people, and a world against him, he did more than many a very celebrated man has done with every concurring circumstance in his favour. The resources of Spain seemed to spring up anew under his hand; and not only the state of the country, but the spirit of the people, appeared to be changed by his influence. Regularity in finance was demanded and obtained; indolence and pride were cast aside; activity and energy, in an extraordinary degree, pervaded the dockyards and the arsenals; various branches of industry, which had long fallen out of use, revived under his encouragement; and we find, to use the words of a Spanish historian, "that he gave a vast impulse to the monarchy, improving remarkably the revenue, creating a respectable marine, organising a powerful army, commanded by excellent generals, and in the end influencing, by his diplomatic talents, the farthest cabinets of Europe."

The great characteristic of Alberoni's administration was incessant activity; and the far-reaching but ill-calculating ambition of the king gave it, perhaps, the appearance of a wild spirit of enterprise, for which Alberoni was blamed in a much higher degree than in all probability was just. That the designs upon Italy were Philip's, the whole conduct of that monarch through life may evince; and that the purpose of snatching the regency from the duke of Orleans also originated with the king, no one can doubt who considers that monarch's often expressed wish to descend from the throne of Spain in order to take possession of the crown of France, should it ever be placed within his grasp by failure of the line in which it had gone.

The minister, also, was compelled, as soon as war was declared, to meet and combat, by every means in his power, the proceedings of all the neighbouring states, ar-

rayed against Spain in the cause of the emperor. Yet, now that we sit calmly and judge by the results, it may seem that he was wanting in that concentration of efforts to the attainment of one great purpose, which is no less one of the attributes of genius than clearness and extent of views. It has been said, and very truly, that all the many efforts which he employed himself busily in making at one time, tended to the great purpose of preventing other states from impeding his master's designs upon Italy; but it can scarcely be a question whether those efforts were not greater than was necessary to insure such a result, as far as it could be insured; and whether they did not weaken the exertions and divide the power of Spain far more than they retarded the proceedings of inimical states. The result, indeed, shows that those efforts had no other effect than to cement the union and increase the animosity of the enemies of Spain; and though, in the case of England, there could be no doubt that it was necessary to impede her proceedings by every exertion, in the case of France, an inert and unwilling enemy was converted into an active and pertinacious one, by schemes which, even had they succeeded, would have produced no advantage adequate to the risk.

The internal policy of Alberoni, however, suffers no such drawbacks; and in the midst of an exhausting and unsuccessful war, surrounded with difficulties, and during a very brief administration of not five years, we find the commencements made and the foundations laid of reforms and institutions, which, had they been pursued steadily and firmly by the same spirit that conceived them, must have produced a permanent amelioration in the state of Spain. The extraordinary evil which had so long existed, and which we have before pointed out *, of a general system of obstruction in regard to internal trade, was nearly done away with under Alberoni, by the removal of local custom-houses at the frontiers of the different kingdoms and provinces of Spain, and by the abolition of most of those restrictions which

* In the life of Olivarez.

had hitherto shackled at every step the communication between one part of Spain and another.

To diminish the import of manufactured articles, and to encourage the production of them in Spain, went hand in hand with the purpose of increasing the exports. For the first of these objects, a new scheme of duties was devised; many facilities which foreign nations had enjoyed in the ports of Spain were abolished; and superintendents were established to prevent the illicit introduction of foreign commodities. To supply any deficiency, however, which might become apparent, in consequence of these new regulations, a variety of different manufactories were founded and encouraged. Fabrics of woollen and of linen, upon improved principles, were established in different parts of Spain. A variety of machines were brought from foreign countries to assist the artisan in his labour, and master workmen were called over from Holland and England to instruct him in his art. Manufactories of glass, of small arms, of powder, and of ball, and founderies of cannon, were established or renewed. The troops were clothed with cloth of Spanish manufacture. Strict orders were given to all provincial governors to encourage and to make use of the fabrics of Spain alone; and at the same time, the exports of wine, oil, &c. were freed from greater part of the restrictions which had embarrassed them.

Nor was Alberoni less anxious to prevent the government from being defrauded of its just dues, than to prevent the trader from being impeded by unnecessary obstacles. The system of contraband trade, long carried on by the Basques, was put an end to; the superintendents in the ports rooted out the extraordinary system of corruption which had previously existed there; the revenue from the tobacco trade was immensely increased by new regulations; and while every thing was simplified in fiscal arrangements, every thing was rendered more exact, and guarded by regularity of returns rather than by a multiplicity of corrupt spies. Ship building was at the same time promoted in all its branches; and

during his short administration, fourteen men of war were completed, and sixteen more nearly finished, in the different ports of Spain. Docks, arsenals, magazines, harbours, and naval schools, showed Alberoni's purpose of turning to the greatest advantage the vast extent and capabilities of the Spanish coast; and, while he was thus employed in ameliorating every thing that at once struck his eye, he despatched engineers and surveyors into every different province in the kingdom, in order to ascertain its condition, productions, and resources; to investigate the capabilities of every town and every district, as the foundation of a general plan for the gradual and progressive improvement of the country committed to his charge. Men may estimate greatness by very different standards; but the minister who follows such a course as this will deserve, whether he gains it or not, the gratitude of the land he rules, and the respect of ages that come after him.

There can be little doubt that in private life Alberoni was a pleasing, we may say a fascinating, companion; for we find that his manners conciliated the regard of men the most different in tastes and pursuits; won, from the very first, the good-will of all who were introduced to him; and even conquered the prejudices of men predisposed to dislike him. The coarse and brutal Vendôme, the courtly and dignified Louis, the sullen and bigotted Philip, the witty and licentious Orsini, and the fiery and ambitious Elizabeth of Farnese, were all captivated by his manners, before they learned to appreciate his talents; and yet, from all that has been recorded of his general conversations, from the expressions to which he gave way in moments of passion, and from a thousand anecdotes concerning him, some of which, at least, must have had their foundation in truth, we find that much of the coarseness of his original station remained upon his mind, uneffaced by the literary pursuits of his youth, and the courtly habits of his mature years. This coarseness, however, generally assumed a humorous character; and, enlivened as it was

by flashes of wit, most probably passed unnoticed in the blaze, even by the eyes which under other circumstances would have judged more severely.

There must have been something, also, not alone persuasive, but, if we may use the term, convincing, in his conversation ; for we find that he exerted a powerful influence over all with whom he was brought in contact ; and that almost every foreign diplomatist, after spending a few hours in his company, left him convinced of his sincerity, even when they had the most occasion to doubt it. That he was of a passionate and hasty disposition we have every reason to believe ; but, at the same time, one of his most marked qualities was command over himself : and it has been doubted, not unreasonably, whether on those occasions in which he gave way to any violent burst of anger he was not actuated, in so doing, by political motives.

In regard to his moral conduct, there may be some difficulty in arriving at the truth, inasmuch as on this subject his enemies have had an opportunity of calumniating him in a manner which he might think it unnecessary to refute. During the height of his power in Spain, he was accused of numberless intrigues and gallantries, not of the most dignified kind, if any thing of the sort can ever deserve such a term ; but malevolence and political rivalry are well aware that private worth and virtue form the great basis of public esteem, and that in assailing them they undermine the foundation itself. The whole of Alberoni's life, however, and the notorious indecency of his conversation, leave little doubt that he was in no way rigid in his morality, and consequently give reason to believe, that the reports on which the pasquinades of the Spanish capital were founded were not without a considerable degree of truth.

In person, Alberoni was, as we have before stated, below the middle size, ugly and disproportioned ; his face was large and swarthy, and many of the features are said to have been heavy. Nevertheless, his

eyes and the general expression of his countenance were full of vivacity and intelligence ; and we are told that nobody could see him without being convinced, even though they knew him not at the time, that he was an extraordinary man.

Such, indeed, we must ever look upon Alberoni to have been. Whether he was a great man or not, even in the usual and limited acceptation of that term, future ages will determine better than the present ; but all must admit, that a man who rose to the highest pinnacle of power against the most adverse circumstances of fortune, drew forth extraordinary and unknown resources from a country supposed to be in the lowest state of depression, agitated the whole of Europe, and for several years maintained an unequal struggle against the diplomatic or the military efforts of the three most powerful states of his day, was no ordinary man, no *pitiful adventurer*. To bestow, as a term of reproach, such an epithet as this — which has frequently and perseveringly been applied to Alberoni — upon a man of genius and great powers of mind, simply because he rose from the lowest classes of society, is doing injustice to human nature. God, when he confers upon one of his reasoning creatures talents and capabilities, a grand scope of intellect, a virtuous heart, and an energetic character, puts in his hands the rod of authority, and makes him, from the first, that which fortune can never make. The difficulties he has to combat, the obstacles he has to overcome, are but the accidents of his fate, perhaps the predestined exercises which strengthen and mature his genius ; and the efforts which he makes to rise to that position in life for which the gifts of the Creator have qualified him, must not be considered as the struggles of a grasping ambition, so much as exertions to work out the high destiny allotted to him, and to take the station which was designed for him by God himself.

SOME OBSERVATIONS UPON THE EFFORTS MADE BY
ALBERONI TO ENGAGE THE KING OF SWEDEN, AND
PETER THE GREAT OF RUSSIA, IN THE CAUSE OF
SPAIN.

IN endeavouring to form a correct estimate of the character of Alberoni, a man who has been more than any other subjected to the extremes of praise and censure, it is absolutely necessary to weigh accurately the probable chances of success in the various enterprises in which his ministry was consumed; for, upon the probability or improbability of those chances depends entirely whether his schemes were great and magnificent, or wild and absurd. Amongst the enterprises which I speak of, the attempt to engage Russia and Sweden in the cause of Spain, and to divert, by causing a war between those countries and England, the fleets of Great Britain from the scene of action in the Mediterranean, is certainly one of the most extraordinary. It appears to me, also, as I have stated before, that there was not only a sufficient prospect of success to justify the attempt, but that, in fact, considerable success was obtained, though the purpose of the Spanish minister was frustrated in the end by events over which he had no control. In my views upon this subject, I perfectly agree with Mr. Coxe; and I fully believe that the transactions of Görtz and Gylenborg, with the adherents of the prince called the Pretender, were known to, and sanctioned by, Charles XII., though he afterwards found it expedient to deny his connivance therein. As, however, a very brilliant, though perhaps not very accurate, writer has taken a view entirely different, and has supported it by strong argumentation, I do not think it just to withhold the statement of Lémontey. I have translated his observations, as there is nothing in

the language which renders it necessary to give the original.

“The project of associating the folly of Charles XII.,” he says, “with the hopes of the Jacobites was old. M. Deberville wrote thus to M. de Torcy concerning it during the life of Louis XIV. : — ‘I have long had my ears deafened with the report, that the king of Sweden is to be the liberator of Great Britain. This is an old song of the Jacobites: their passions blinded them to such a degree, that they repeated it even during the time that Charles XII. was shut up in Stralsund. I informed his majesty of it at the time, with the fact, that the principal Jacobites offered 200,000*l.* for the expedition. M. Müllern, to whom the Swedish envoy had written the proposition of some of the Jacobites, of which I had the honour of informing you, has replied, that he has not thought proper to speak of it to the king, for fear he should plunge head-foremost into so ticklish a project, that prince having need of giving his subjects a long repose, instead of engaging himself in new undertakings.’

“Gylenborg then imagined the plan of associating with Görtz and Sparre, and even, as people believed, with Wendernat, the finance minister of Sweden; and the whole together worked, upon their own account, the credulity of the Jacobites. They did not pique themselves upon any great discretion in an intrigue where their only object was to sell vain promises; and king George, warned from every quarter, caused Gylenborg to be arrested in London, and Görtz in Holland, by the agency of the States General. Nobody in Europe believed the king of Sweden to be an accomplice of his ministers. The marquis of Châteauneuf expresses himself in the following terms : — ‘The object of M. Görtz was only to draw money from the English; and the king of Sweden knew nothing of the hopes that he gave them. How should this prince have projected invasions, when he has not the means of defending himself at home? How should he have con-

spired with the czar, when peace is not made between them? M. Görtz does not speak rationally: he has long been esteemed a rogue: he merits at present the title of a blockhead; his negotiation is that of a pickpocket.' (*Letters of Châteauneuf to the Maréchal D'Uxelles, the 2d, 9th, 12th, and 19th of March, 1717.*)

"Count de la Marck, and M. de Campredon, write, on their part, — 'The king declares strongly, that he has never thought of the pretended descent; and he demands that his ministers should be sent back to him; in order to do justice upon them. The opinion of Sweden, and of all the senators, is, that the conspiracy is nothing but a piece of swindling, in order to get money. Görtz acknowledges, that he only wished to get the money of the Jacobites, and that he had thus drawn from them 80,000 crowns for his own share.'"

Such is a part of the account of Lémontey, in regard to which I repeat the question I put before. If Charles XII. was really unaware of the proceedings of his ministers, and demanded them from England and Holland for the purpose of doing justice upon them, how happened he to load this very man Görtz with honours and favours, to confide in him more fully than ever, and to raise him to the highest employments in the state? And, if the prospect of a descent in England, for the purpose of restoring the family of Stuart to the throne, was likely to be so tempting to Charles XII., even when he was shut up in Stralsund, that the Swedish minister dared not even to mention it to him, for fear that he should plunge headlong into it at a moment of necessity and distress, was it at all wild, unreasonable, or injudicious of Alberoni to hope that he might induce him to execute the very same project at a time when his own situation was so much better that he could undertake the conquest of Norway; when Spain was ready to support him with money, to strengthen him with troops, to relieve him by a diversion in another quarter; and when Russia, at peace with Sweden, no longer threatened it with annihilation? It

thus seems to me that, by Lémontey's own showing, the plan of Alberoni for inducing Sweden to join with Spain was any thing but vague, wild, and injudicious ; and that the conduct of that minister certainly did not deserve the harsh terms with which the French author has loaded him. Lémontey, however, proceeds as follows :—

“ But that which covered the pretended conspirators with ridicule, and placed their roguery in open day, was their correspondence, which king George caused to be printed. These letters are in number thirty-four, and extend from the beginning of September, 1716, to the end of February following. Want, fraud, and folly take the pen turn by turn. Gylenborg writes to Görtz, on the 10th of February, — ‘ I entreat you to make such arrangements, that I may be relieved from the care of thinking where to find the needful. A narrow mind like mine is assuredly not equal to it.’ This poor conspirator was often in need of a few guineas to pay for the printing of the little libels which they composed against the king of England. From the impossibility of producing an engagement on the part of their master, he and his accomplices exhausted themselves in manufacturing fables to draw the purse-strings of their dupes, solely, they said, *ad captandam regiam benevolentiam*. The Jacobites of France and Avignon were naturally more credulous and generous ; but those of England drove Gylenborg to despair. ‘ One of their chiefs (he writes to Görtz on the 4th of December) has spoken to me in the following terms :— “ To flatter yourself, that, either out of respect or friendship, we should give our money to any person whatsoever, is not to know the English. You will never change us upon this point : you must take us such as we are, *manus nostræ oculatæ sunt, credunt quod vident*.” ’

“ The maréchal d’Uxelles, moreover, verified the falsity of the pretended armament at Gottenburg ; and he caused it to be proved, that there existed nothing in

that port but twelve old frigates, not armed, and incapable of putting to sea."

Still the extraordinary fact remains, that two Swedish ambassadors, and the Swedish minister of finance, should engage in such projects without the knowledge and consent of their master ; and that, when he had discovered such intrigues, and found that they had nearly involved him in war with so powerful a country as Great Britain, that he should raise the principal intriguer high in his confidence, and intrust to his management the deepest interests of his state. It seems much more likely that he should have thus rewarded a minister who, though detected in a dangerous negotiation, had the good policy to preserve intact the secrets of his master, and take the blame upon himself. But the name of the czar Peter was also implicated in the conspiracy of Görtz ; and both monarchs, finding that nothing could be proved against them, denied, as a matter of course, any share in the designs of the Swedish ministers. But it will be remarked, that the denial of Charles XII. is couched in terms which, coupled with the "substantial justice" that he did render to his ministers when they were given up to him, leave his participation in their acts as doubtful as ever. Lémontey states his view of the subject as follows :—

"The Swedish ministers had the effrontery to hold out a prospect, in their correspondence, of the co-operation of the czar, and to cite as a surety his physician, Areskin. The czar hastened to give the court of London a formal disavowal of 'these infamous insinuations, of these artifices to divide the allies of the north, and to repair a ruined cause. He speaks of Charles XII. as of a violent, vindictive, irreconcilable enemy ; and he announces that his physician, Areskin, pledges his head against the imposture of the Swedish ministers.' Charles XII., on his side, torn between his vanity, which revolted at the idea of giving satisfaction to the king of England, and his honour, which was compromised by the roguery of his ministers, gave also

a disavowal, addressed to the landgrave of Hesse, and to the regent of France. George consented to receive from the latter mediator the disavowal, in the same terms which the king of Sweden had used; assured his Britannic majesty that the king of Sweden has not, and has never had, any intention of troubling the tranquillity of Britain; that he has never entered into any of the designs attributed to his ministers; that he looks upon the bare suspicion that he took part in such projects as injurious to him; and that he intends, whenever his ministers are given up to him, to examine into their conduct, in order to do substantial justice upon them if they have abused their character."

It will be remarked, that it was some time after this transaction that Alberoni commenced his negotiations with Sweden, for the purpose of inducing Charles to co-operate with Spain against England; and that the condition of the Swedish monarch was very greatly improved before he did so. Lémontey, however, goes on to say,—“When Alberoni endeavoured to renew this intrigue, he did not urge any more the project of a descent, because the king of Sweden was without the means of executing it; and that the czar took no interest in the pretender, feared the English more than he hated their king, and flew into a fury at the sole mention of hazarding his rising marine against an English fleet. But he endeavoured to unite the two monarchs against the elector of Hanover, and, above all, against the emperor. He suspected, with reason, that the czar desired to gain a footing in Germany, and for that reason supported his nephew, the duke of Mecklenberg, who pursued the emperor for some breaches of the laws of the empire.

“Alberoni did not fail to open, according to his custom, various vague and multiplied negotiations upon such weak data. He sent Possobueno into Sweden; but he could never catch the king in his continual journeys. Görtz caused the son of his friend, count Weling, a young and inconsistent man, whose voyage

proved useless, to set out for Madrid. In Paris, Cellamar sounded the Swedish ambassador, who, at the bare name of subsidies, promised every thing that was wished; but, when the conditions came to be arranged with the baron de Schleitz, the minister of Russia, the latter demanded that the subsidies destined for Sweden should pass through the hands of the czar. Cellamar, indignant, wrote to Alberoni that he was surrounded by serpents and leeches. 'Può ben da ciò V. E. inferire che dappertutto siamo cinti o da serpenti che ci vogliono mordere ed avvelenare, o da sanguisughe che vogliono dolcemente dissanguarci.' (*Lettre de Cellamare du 26. Septembre, 1718.*) In Holland, which was the centre of the intrigue, the marquis of Berretti Landi withdrew by the express order of Alberoni all offers of money, and broke off all negotiations, more than two months before the death of Charles XII. (See *Letter of Berretti to Cellamare, 7th October, 1718.*)

"The conferences of the isle of Aland offered a field not less sterile. The inflexible czar persisted in retaining all his conquests. The two Swedish ministers Görtz and Müllern were not of the same opinion; the first seeking peace with Prussia and Russia, and the second seeking for a general peace. In the mean time the king of Sweden, laughing both at his ministers and at the conferences, negotiated personally with the baron de Fabrice, secret envoy of the king of England, and nephew of his Hanoverian minister. France was well aware of all these proceedings of Alberoni; and Dubois rejoiced in these projects of an impossible league, which alarmed the emperor, and attached him more strongly than ever to the quadruple alliance."

It is necessary to remark on these assertions of Lémonthey, that, though Berretti Landi did withdraw all offers of money, and might have broken off the negotiations with the Swedish ministers in Holland, it is quite clear that those negotiations were carried on directly between the courts of Spain and Sweden long afterwards, and were going on even at the very time of

the death of Charles XII. Nor were the suspicions which England justly entertained of Sweden fully removed till the beginning of April in the following year, when the prohibition in regard to commercial transactions between the two countries was taken off, although Charles XII. had at that time been dead several months. The suspicions of the British government afford the strongest possible proof that the connection between Spain and Sweden had not been broken off; and in regard to the conferences of the isle of Aland, so much mystery enveloped the whole business, that no one has ever been able to penetrate the veil in which those negotiations were wrapped. As Lémon-*tey* does not cite his authorities for this part of his statements, we may conclude that he merely gives his own views upon the data that are open to every one. Those data would lead me, as they have led Mr. Coxe and many others, to believe that the preliminaries of an offensive as well as defensive alliance were there concluded between Russia, Sweden, and Spain; which preliminaries were never carried into execution from causes which neither Alberoni nor any one else could foresee. The arrangements concluded between the Spanish ambassadors in Paris and the Hague, and the Swedish and Russian ministers of those places, show that the negotiations had proceeded to a considerable extent. The conferences of the isle of Aland followed; and the project of alliance found amongst the papers of Görtz, upon his execution, evidently display to what point the whole was tending. One of the principal features of that project was an attack upon the Hanoverian dominions of the king of England; and the impression made by the whole affair, when clearly stated, is, that Alberoni undertook, and nearly carried into execution, a vast enterprise for uniting the two great northern powers in hostility to England; and for effecting a powerful diversion in favour of Spain, either by an attack upon England itself, which would immediately have withdrawn her fleets from the Mediterranean, or by an attack upon some part

of Germany, which would at once withdraw a part of the forces both of the emperor and the king of England from the scene of contest with Spain : farther, that in this design he was so far successful as to have engaged Russia and Sweden in negotiations which bade fair to terminate successfully ; and that the preliminary terms had been drawn up, comprising all that Alberoni could himself have desired. Lémontey next proceeds to attack Voltaire, who was certainly very often inexact in his dates and conclusions, but very seldom in the distinct facts which he asserts. It would be unfair, however, to Lémontey to leave out this part of his statement, especially as it is my intention to give the letter of Alberoni to Voltaire ; and one whole letter of Voltaire, with an extract from another, to which Lémontey refers, and which, it appears to me, he construes somewhat too favourably to his own views. He proceeds as follows :—“ Voltaire was completely ignorant of all this policy of the north, which, nevertheless, does not prevent him from speaking with much confidence, in the eighth book of his ‘ History of Charles XII.,’ of the conspiracy of Gylenborg, and of the negotiations of Görtz, of the czar, and of Alberoni. But if one excepts the rind of some material and public facts, that which he says is a continual error. Out of many proofs of this, I shall only cite two. Voltaire assures us that Charles XII. does not disavow his ministers ; and I have read the original of this disavowal.”

On this I must remark that, though Voltaire was not, perhaps, justified in saying absolutely, that Charles did not disavow his ministers, yet, the only disavowal which he made, and which we have given before, was couched in such empty and unsatisfactory words, and so susceptible of a double interpretation, that it can scarcely be considered as a disavowal at all, when coupled with the fact that, as soon as he had extricated them from the prisons into which they had been thrown, he not only neglected to ratify his disavowal by any act of punishment, but virtually recanted it by the honours he

showered upon them, and the confidence he placed in them. If masters are responsible for the acts of their servants, still more must states be held responsible for the acts of their ambassadors ; and it certainly is not too much to say, that the favour which Charles showed to Görtz, immediately after his return to Sweden, was a recognition of the acts he had committed, as his own. M. Lémontey must put much greater faith in the mere words of princes than I do, if he can hold a few empty sentences, with a double sense, to be of more value than open, decided, and incontrovertible acts. Thus, it is my full belief that, although Voltaire was perhaps slightly wrong in the expression that Charles did not disavow his ministers, he was right in the fact, and that all his acts avowed and acknowledged them in the clearest and most indisputable manner.

Lémontey goes on, however, to say,—“ He (Voltaire) assures us still farther, that, in the conditions of peace between Sweden and Russia, which were found amongst the papers of Görtz, it was stipulated that the czar should furnish vessels to transport 10,000 Swedes to England. I have read these conditions ; and I can certify that they contain nothing of the kind. It is only said therein, that, if the king of England does not restore Bremen and Werden, they will indemnify themselves from the electorate of Hanover. It is not that I believe any faith must be placed in this pretended project, which has no appearance of authenticity. It is written by no minister, and resembles those thousand scraps which statesmen are liable to receive from every hand. An editor of the ‘ History of Charles XII.’ pretends that Alberoni has certified all these assertions of Voltaire in a letter which he himself addressed to that writer. This is drawing a very exaggerated consequence from a simple piece of politeness of that cardinal. I have found copies of that letter, and the reply which Voltaire made to it, amongst the portfolios of the maréchal de Belleisle. As I believe the first never to have been published, I shall place them both at the end of these investigations. I shall join thereunto a

second letter of Voltaire, where he himself avows the incorrectness of the memoirs on which he wrote the history of Charles XII."

It appears to me that Lémontey makes a much more exaggerated use in this place of the words of Voltaire, than that of which he complains in regard to the letter of Alberoni. The letter to which he alludes is one in which he requests the French minister in Russia to obtain from the empress Elizabeth the materials for writing a history of Peter the Great; and he is giving a reason for undertaking such a work shortly after having written the history of Charles XII., when he makes use of the following words, which seem to me by no means to bear out the assertion of Lémontey, that he acknowledges the incorrectness of the memoirs on which he wrote the history of Charles XII. I extract them, because I have not space to give the whole letter: but it contains nothing else on that subject; and I give them in the original, that I may not risk perverting them in translation:—"J'ai écrit il y a quelques années *une histoire de Charles XII.* sur des mémoires fort bons, quant au fond, mais dans lesquels il y avait quelques erreurs sur les détails des actions de ce monarque. J'ai actuellement des mémoires plus exacts et fort supérieurs à ceux que M. Norberg a employés. Mon dessein serait de les fondre dans une histoire de Pierre-le-Grand. Ma façon de penser me détermine plus vers cet empereur que vers le roi de Suède. Le premier a été un législateur; il a fondé des villes, et, j'ose le dire, son empire. Charles XII. a presque détruit son royaume. Il était un plus grand soldat; mais je crois l'autre un plus grand homme."

It will be seen that Voltaire only says that he wrote the history of Charles XII., upon the strength of memoirs, very good as to the substance, but in which there were some errors of detail in regard to the actions of that monarch. Now I should suppose that Voltaire could never consider the question of whether Charles XII. did, or did not, agree with Russia to send 10,000 or 12,000 men into England, as one of the errors of detail to

which he refers ; and, therefore, that he was persuaded to the last, there was good authority for the statement he had made in that respect. It is very probable that Lémontey might see a copy of the project found amongst Görtz's papers such as it was sent by the French minister at Stockholm to his court at the time, but, as far as I can learn, the original remained in Sweden ; and there are no less than three or four different accounts of that project, each differing from the other in some particulars ; which leads me to imagine that, for reasons which may easily be divined, the ministers of Ulrica Eleanora did not make the document public, and that the copies obtained by even ambassadors were inaccurate or incomplete. This may or may not be so, however, as I only give my own opinion. The farther observations of Lémontey upon this subject refer to an enterprise of some Swedish adventurers, which, in all probability, had nothing political in its character, although it has been very generally represented as one of Alberoni's schemes. It would seem certain, however, that the freebooters by whom the enterprise was projected had obtained permission to use the port of Cadiz as their starting point ; and it is not at all impossible that Alberoni was very well pleased to see and to countenance any project which might injure the English commerce, occupy her marine, and make her feel the evil consequences of having neglected to seize the advantages held out to her by Spain. The letters of Alberoni and Voltaire to which Lémontey alludes are as follows. Although I have translated these letters, I subjoin the originals also, as the style is in itself somewhat curious and interesting.

Alberoni to Voltaire.

“ Sir,

“ 10th February, 1735.

“ The life which you have written of the late king of Sweden has been made known to me somewhat late to give you many thanks for that which regards me therein. Your prepossession and your regard for my person has

carried you far ; since, with your sublime style of writing, which is incomparable, you have said of me more in two words, than Pliny said of Trajan in his long pægyric. Happy the princes who shall be fortunate enough to interest you in their actions ! Your pen suffices to render them immortal. For my part, sir, I protest towards you sentiments of the most perfect gratitude ; and I assure you that nobody in the world esteems you, loves you, or respects you more than

“ THE CARDINAL ALBERONI.”

Voltaire to Alberoni.

“ The letter with which your eminence has honoured me is as flattering a recompence for my works as the esteem of Europe must have been to you for your actions. You owe me no thanks, my lord ; I have only been the organ of the public in speaking of you. Freedom and truth, which have always conducted my pen, have procured me your suffrage. These two characteristics must please a genius such as yours : whoever does not love them may, perhaps, be a powerful man, but can never be a great one.

“ I would fain be enabled to admire more near, one to whom I have rendered justice from such a distance. I do not flatter myself with ever having the honour of seeing your eminence ; but, if ever Rome sufficiently knows its interests to seek at least to re-establish arts and commerce, and to recall some splendour to a country which was formerly the master of the most beautiful part of the world, I hope that then I shall write to you under another title than that of your eminence, of whom I have the honour to be, with as much esteem as respect, &c.

“ VOLTAIRE.”

The following are the originals :—

“ Le 10. Février, 1735.

“ Il m'est arrivé assez tard la connaissance, monsieur, de la vie que vous avez écrite du feu roi de Suède pour vous donner bien des graces pour ce qui me regarde. Votre prévention et

vosre penchant pour ma personne vous a porté assez loin ; puisque avec vosre style sublime d'écrire, qui est incomparable, vous avez plus dit en deux mots de moi que ce qu'a dit Pline de Trajan dans son long panégyrique. Heureux les princes qui auront le bonheur de vous intéresser dans leurs faits ! Vosre plume suffit pour les rendre immortels. A mon égard, monsieur, je vous proteste les sentimens de la plus parfaite reconnaissance ; et je vous assure que personne au monde ne vous estime, ne vous aime, et ne vous respecte plus que

“ LE CARDINAL ALBERONI.”

“ La lettre dont vosre éminence m'a honoré est un prix aussi flatteur de mes ouvrages que l'estime de l'Europe a dû vous l'être de vos actions. Vous ne me devez aucun remerciement, monseigneur. Je n'ai été que l'organe du public en parlant de vous. La liberté et la vérité, qui ont toujours conduit ma plume, m'ont valu vosre suffrage. Ces deux caractères doivent plaire à un génie tel que le vôtre : quiconque ne les aime pas pourra bien être un homme puissant, mais il ne sera jamais un grand homme.

“ Je voudrais être a portée d'admirer de plus près celui à qui j'ai rendu justice de si loin. Je ne me flatte pas d'avoir jamais l'honneur de voir vosre éminence ; mais si Rome entend assez ses intérêts pour vouloir au moins rétablir les arts, et le commerce et remettre quelque splendeur dans un pays qui a été autrefois le maître de la plus belle partie du monde, j'espère alors que je vous écrirai sous un autre titre que sous celui de vosre éminence, dont j'ai l'honneur d'être avec autant d'estime que de respect, etc.

“ VOLTAIRE.”

These letters certainly can be received as no proof that Voltaire depicted this or that point in the life of Alberoni correctly. That from the prelate to the great writer is but a letter of compliment, and nothing more ; and merely implies that Alberoni was satisfied with the view which Voltaire had taken of his general character. I have endeavoured to do justice to that character in the preceding pages ; and it has been anxiety to do so which has led me to examine thus at length the statements of Lémontey in regard to some of the most obscure passages in the life of the Italian statesman, even at the risk of seeming tedious to the public. The

matter will probably still remain obscure ; but the full conviction of my mind is, after much thought and inquiry, that Alberoni, upon good information in regard to the disposition of Charles XII. and the czar, undertook, carried on, and nearly succeeded in effecting, an enterprise, which was the only means that could at all counterbalance the alliance of France, England, and the empire, and enable him to pursue, with even a tolerable degree of success, that war into which the eager passions of his master had hurried him before he had completed those great preparations on which its results principally depended.

JOHN WILLIAM, DUKE OF RIPPERDA.

BORN 1665, DIED 1737.

ALTHOUGH the famous Ripperda certainly does not deserve the name of a great statesman, yet a celebrated statesman he undoubtedly was ; and although the fame that he acquired depended more upon the wildness of his schemes, and the singularity of his adventures, than upon the vigour of his mind and the success of his undertakings, yet it is impossible to leave out of a general collection like this the life of one who excited so much the attention of Europe, and in some degree influenced its fate.

John William, Baron of Ripperda, descended from an ancient and honourable Spanish family, which had settled at Gröningen during the period that the Low Countries were attached to Spain, was born in that district in the latter part of the seventeenth century. The date of his birth is uncertain, some placing it in the year 1665, others in 1680. This extraordinary difference is not easily accounted for ; and my only motive for deciding in favour of the earlier date rather than the later is, that he had passed through a number of occupations and employments previous to the year 1715, which would seem to imply a more advanced age than 1680 would admit of. The immediate branch of his family from which he was descended had adhered to the religion of his forefathers, and the young Ripperda was educated in the jesuits' college at Cologne. In that seminary he rapidly acquired an extensive acquaintance with classical literature, as well as with the mathematical sciences.

After distinguishing himself considerably in the pro-

gress of his education, he returned to the United Provinces; and in the commencement of the war of the succession entered into the army, where he served with distinction, and rose to the rank of colonel. In his progress through different parts of the country, he did not forget to employ to his own advantage those leisure hours which are always scattered through a military life. He acquired an intimate knowledge of commerce and finance, inquired minutely into the manufactures of his native country, and investigated, we are told, as deeply as it was then possible to do, those principles of political economy which were but little understood as a science, though they had been employed in practice by more than one great statesman in Europe. In addition to these studies, he applied himself to cultivate his natural facility for acquiring foreign languages; and, we are told, spoke French, Spanish, and English, as if each had been his native tongue.

His own fortune, which, though not large, was sufficient, was about this time increased by his marriage with the heiress of very considerable property; and we are assured, that, on this occasion, with a facility not very honourable to the instructions of his religious preceptors, he began the many changes which took place in his faith, by renouncing that doctrine to which his family had so pertinaciously adhered. Aspiring to political distinction, he was eager to cultivate the good opinion of the most celebrated men with whom he was brought in contact; and he early formed an acquaintance with the famous prince Eugène, which afterwards tended considerably to promote his views and serve his ambition. Steadily pursuing his purposes, he sought eagerly a seat in the states general, and, with wealth, talents, and reputation, easily obtained his object; being returned, towards the end of the war, as deputy for his own province.

During the conferences which preceded the famous treaty of Utrecht, Ripperda exerted himself to form the acquaintance, and to obtain the friendship, of the

various foreign plenipotentiaries who were collected together for the purpose of giving peace to Europe. In the same transactions he was not without several opportunities of displaying his own diplomatic skill and political knowledge. The treaty having been concluded, was found by all parties weak, limited, and inefficient. Spain and the empire were left without the full removal of one cause of dispute between them. The commercial relations of England and of Holland with the Spanish monarchy were still completely unsettled ; and the two great trading countries had each to pursue for herself a long and intricate negotiation, affecting her dearest interests.

In this state of things one great object was, to arrange definitively a regular system of commercial intercourse between Holland and Spain, and it became absolutely necessary that a Dutch agent should be despatched to the court of Madrid, to maintain the interests of his country, and scarcely less necessary that the person appointed to fill that important office should be selected with the greatest care and discrimination. Ripperda used every exertion to obtain it for himself, and not without success, being appointed envoy extraordinary in the beginning of the year 1715. In May of that year he set out for the Spanish capital, leaving behind him, in the United Provinces, his wife and two children — a son and daughter. Having afterwards been appointed ambassador at the Spanish court, he wrote to his wife to join him ; but as she was preparing to do so, she was prevented from proceeding on her journey by illness, and died in the year 1717.

On arriving at the court of Spain, Ripperda found every thing in a state of confusion, embarrassment, and transition, which offered the fairest opportunities to a political adventurer like himself. Possessing the peculiar talent which the cardinal de Richelieu so eminently displayed in the early period of his ambitious course — that of divining instinctively, as it were, who are the persons destined to rise in the struggles for power, Ripperda

immediately attached himself to Alberoni, assisted him with memorials and plans of improvement for the commercial and financial system of Spain ; and, while he thus gained great facilities for conducting the negotiations on the part of Holland, he assisted Alberoni himself in his ascent to power, gained his confidence, secured his protection, and opened for himself opportunities of carrying on intrigues not very much to his honour, as an ambassador or a man. It is pretty clearly ascertained that during his residence at the court of Madrid, as ambassador from the United Provinces, he maintained a secret correspondence with the emperor, to whose notice he had been introduced by prince Eugène ; and that for serving that monarch as a spy upon the proceedings of the court of Madrid, he obtained a pension, which, notwithstanding his private resources, was not unnecessary to support the ostentatious and extravagant style in which he lived.

A more distinct and equally disgraceful intrigue he carried on at the same time with the British ministers ; courting the acquaintance of Mr. Doddington, and offering his mediation for the purpose of concluding the celebrated commercial treaty between Spain and Great Britain. Acting the part of a political go-between, he first made the British envoy aware of the increasing power and prospects of Alberoni, and in the end introduced him to that statesman. He then did all that he could to facilitate the signature of the treaty, and ultimately obtained from the court of England, in the name of Alberoni, a present of 14,000 pistoles, which he boldly appropriated to his own use. Whether that statesman ever did or did not discover the fraud which the Dutch ambassador had committed, I do not know ; but it would appear that he retained the confidence of Alberoni long after this transaction, and continued to assist him with his advice during the whole period of his rise to power.

The precise moment for throwing off the mask, and declaring himself minister, was, we are told, sug-

gested to Alberoni by Ripperda; but this confidence is no proof that the Italian statesman was not well aware of the fraudulent and deceitful character of his friend and counsellor; for, trusting to his own powers of discrimination, Alberoni never showed any apprehension of employing persons whom he knew to possess no other claim upon confidence than great abilities. Those abilities were certainly not deficient in Ripperda; and to them he joined a number of superficial accomplishments, together with that plausible and yet decided manner, which often goes so far in impressing mankind with the conviction that the possessor thereof has a thousand great and splendid qualities of which he is in reality devoid. Whether Alberoni, clear-sighted as he really was, became the dupe of Ripperda in any degree, or only estimated him at his just value, matters little, as it is certain that no sooner had the cardinal assumed the public exercise he had long possessed, than he became jealous of Ripperda, whose objects he saw were very similar to his own, and whose talents were sufficient to render him a rival to be apprehended. He therefore endeavoured, as far as possible, to exclude him from all access to the king; and although Ripperda continued studiously to court the minister himself, to affect great affection and devotion for his person, and profound respect for his abilities, Alberoni took care to impede his more ambitious views, while he made use of him for the furtherance of his own designs. Thus by his assistance he laboured to found a new and extensive cloth manufactory in Spain; and by means of Ripperda also induced fifty master workmen from Holland to establish themselves in the Peninsula, first placing them at Azeca, and then at Guadalaxara.

No sooner did Ripperda hint at a public recompence for his services, however, and at his willingness to abandon his own country for an establishment in Spain, than Alberoni took care he should be met with an objection, which he imagined would prove insuperable. It was pointed out to Ripperda by officers

about the king's person, undoubtedly by the direction of Alberoni, that his catholic majesty could never employ, in any high and responsible office, a person attached to the protestant faith. It is more than probable that Alberoni imagined Ripperda's previous change of religion would prevent him, by a feeling of shame, from again abandoning the creed he had adopted. He miscalculated Ripperda's scruples, however; and the baron was not very long in using the very stumbling-block which had been thrown in his way as a stepping-stone to mount into power.

Ripperda had gained the confidence and affection, it would seem, of several persons immediately attached to the king; and through their means he represented to the monarch, that the sight of his virtues and religious devotion had made so deep an impression upon his mind, as to cause bitter repentance for his temporary apostasy from the true faith, to render him anxious to devote himself to the service of so great and good a king, and to make him willing to resign his country, his high offices, and the heretical doctrines he had adopted, in order to save his own soul, and follow the bright example of such a master. The sacrifice, he added, would indeed be great; but he doubted not that the liberal monarch would make him some compensation, which in justice to himself and his family he was bound to look for.

In pursuance of the plan which he had laid down for himself, he quitted the Spanish capital in March, 1718, and returning to Holland, rendered a full account of his mission, of which the states expressed their approbation; he then resigned formally the office he held, and with as much rapidity as possible arranged his private affairs, which we have some reason to think had fallen into a state of much derangement. This having been done, he took his children with him, and once more set out for Madrid, from which capital he was absent little more than three months. No sooner had he returned, than he made his solemn abjuration at St. Ildefonso, before a

large congregation of the nobles of the land ; and immediately afterwards received the appointment of superintendent-general of the royal manufactories at Guadalajara, with a considerable pension, a grant of land, and a splendid house, which had formerly belonged to the admiral of Castille.

Here the knowledge which he had acquired in Holland had full scope to display itself, and the manufactories under his direction instantly assumed an aspect of prosperity and success, which was in itself no slight recommendation to the royal favour. He sought other means, however, of obtaining the affection and regard of the king, and of forcing his way through the barriers that Alberoni endeavoured to oppose against him. He affected deep devotion ; cultivated the acquaintance of D'Aubenton, the monarch's confessor ; strove for and obtained the regard of Grimaldo, the favourite secretary of the king, whom not even Alberoni had been able to displace ; and at the same time induced the emperor to use his influence with the duke of Parma, in order to obtain for him, Ripperda, the favour and support of the queen.

While using these exertions to acquire interest, he lost no opportunity of endeavouring to prove himself worthy of higher employments. He drew up memorials, he sketched out plans, but his plans and memorials were no longer for the service of Alberoni ; on the contrary, many of them tended directly to impugn the judgment of that statesman, and to point out evil results which might ensue from his various operations. Alberoni could not be long ignorant of such proceedings ; and although Ripperda affected still to court and respect him, the minister, now in the plenitude of his power, resolved to punish, at least, the cabals which he could not prevent. Suddenly, and without any reasonable cause, Ripperda was removed from the post he occupied, and deprived of the pension he enjoyed. He might well have demanded what fault he had committed, and have remonstrated on the injustice and impolicy of the proceeding. The

vast manufactory over which he presided already employed many thousands of workmen ; large quantities of cloth had been already produced ; and the wool of the country, one of its most important productions, was day by day rendered more immediately beneficial to Spain, by being manufactured in native looms. Ripperda had promised that in the course of time a sufficient quantity of cloth should be produced to supply not only the whole of the Spanish dominions in Europe, but also to furnish abundantly the colonial trade ; and the rapid progress of the important establishment under his direction, the improvement in the habits and situation of the people of Guadalaxara and the neighbouring districts, and the spirit of industry and enterprise which the very undertaking had generated — a spirit sure to spread under proper encouragement — gave the strongest guarantee that his predictions would be ultimately fulfilled.

Ripperda, however, was too wise to remonstrate against the act of a minister still all-powerful with the court of Madrid ; and, following a plan directly opposite, he affected to impute to others the blow which had fallen upon him ; paid assiduous court to Alberoni ; and fixing himself at Madrid, pursued unceasingly the schemes which he had commenced, for attracting the notice of those whose favour was likely to confer power. Shortly after this period the mischances that attended all the efforts of Alberoni's administration began to diminish his favour with the king and queen ; and the confessor D'Aubenton was gained over to the party of the duke of Orleans. The secretary Grimaldo, also, who had always been friendly towards England, had been rendered inimical to a minister now strenuously opposed to that power ; and both uniting to overthrow Alberoni, made use of Ripperda's superior knowledge for the purpose of displaying to the king and queen, in various letters and memorials, the real or imputed errors of the minister.

Ripperda willingly lent himself to their views, which

so well coincided with his own ; and taking the opportunity of exhibiting his own talents, while he assailed the judgment of Alberoni, he pointed out with much skill and sagacity the probable consequences of many of the cardinal's measures, and predicted from all of them unmitigated evil to Spain. If but a few even are fulfilled out of a number of prophecies, the person who puts them forth is almost sure to gain credit for the universal accomplishment of his predictions ; and a number of events combined to give to Ripperda a high character for political sagacity. By his representations, and the accomplishment of much which he had foretold as the inevitable consequence of Alberoni's measures, the credit of the cardinal was much shaken, and the efforts of the allied powers easily procured his fall. In recompense for his services on this occasion, he was not only restored to the office which he had formerly held, but was created superintendent-general of the manufactories of Spain ; and, taking up his residence at Segovia, displayed all that luxurious ostentation which was one of his principal vices, and which in turn produced many others.

The rewards which Ripperda received, however, were in no degree commensurate with his ambition or expectations. He aspired openly to a place in the administration ; used all his efforts to ingratiate himself more and more with the queen, and through her influence succeeded in so far gaining the approbation of Philip, that it is more than probable he might at once have accomplished his object, had not his former friends and protectors, D'Aubenton and Grimaldo, united in making the most vigorous efforts to exclude from power a man whose intriguing spirit was even of a more restless and daring character than that of Alberoni himself. The objections which they urged against Ripperda are said to have been, that he was in the first place a foreigner, possessing no real connection with Spain whatever ; and in the next place, that he was but newly converted to the religion of the country, and was

by no means to be regarded as a strong and confirmed adherent to the catholic faith.

About this time, however, he strengthened his connection with Spain by marrying a Castilian lady of a noble and distinguished family, who bore him two sons; and the objections on the score of religion he endeavoured to remove, by affecting the utmost devotion and zeal for the catholic faith, and lamenting publicly, on various occasions, that he had ever been drawn into a heresy, which he sincerely condemned and abhorred. These measures had some effect; but the death of the confessor D'Aubenton, which took place on the 7th of August, 1724, removed from his path the greatest obstacle; and he pursued his attack upon Grimaldo, which had already commenced with a series of memorials, displaying his general ignorance of policy, and the evil effects of his devotion to England, with far greater success than when that minister had been supported by the confessor. The post which D'Aubenton had occupied was soon filled by a Spanish jesuit of the name of Bermudez; but that priest brought to the task neither the talents, the firmness, nor the experience of D'Aubenton; and though he might have sufficient power to hurry on the king in that course of gloomy superstition to which his own inclinations led him, yet his influence did not reach the extent of withholding him from any rash or imprudent step towards which he might be disposed.

Left without the support of one in every respect so powerful as D'Aubenton, possessed of abilities not the most splendid, and unequal to the vast load of the government of Spain, Grimaldo was shaken by the efforts of Ripperda, and was at the same time deprived of a share of influence, by the rising power of the marquis of Castelar. Such was the state of affairs at the court of Madrid; and Ripperda beheld opening before him a fairer prospect than ever of obtaining the object of his ambition, when Philip, no longer opposed by the strong councils of D'Aubenton, proceeded to execute a scheme which he

had long meditated, and abdicated the crown of Spain in favour of his eldest son.

It is not necessary here to investigate the causes or motives of this extraordinary event. The king, before he retired to the seclusion of St. Ildefonso, nominated the counsellors of his son, of whom Ripperda was not one ; and Grimaldo, well understanding that Spain would still be governed rather by the abdicated than the ostensible monarch, accompanied the king to his retirement ; exercising the office of secretary, but, in fact, directing the whole movements of the state. These arrangements seemed to overthrow for ever the hopes of Ripperda ; but that adventurer, in his efforts for his own rise, never lost sight of any probable changes which might produce a favourable effect on his fortunes. He devoted himself zealously to cultivate the regard of the queen-dowager, who was not, perhaps, less well disposed towards him on account of his hostility to Grimaldo. In her retirement he suggested to her plans and purposes for promoting the interests of her own children, which were not forgotten at an after period ; and in the jealous rivalry which soon took place between the courts of Madrid and St. Ildefonso, it is not improbable that Ripperda was well satisfied at not having been nominated to a new ministry whose hold of power was so precarious.

The contentions of the two cabinets so completely embarrassed the machine of state, that earnest remonstrances were made to Philip for the purpose of inducing him to resume the government of the country. In these there is some reason to suppose that Ripperda joined ; but, whatever were the motives of his retirement, whether religious scruples, as some have supposed, or ambitious views upon the throne of France, as others have imagined, Philip could not be prevailed upon during his son's life to take up again the authority he had so solemnly laid down. The struggle between the two courts, however, and the temporary difficulties

which had been brought upon the nation, were at length terminated by the death of the young king, who died of the small-pox, on the 31st of August, 1724.

No sooner had Louis been pronounced in danger, than Philip, it would appear, determined to resume the crown. An instrument had been signed by the young prince, almost in the agonies of death, declaring his father to be his heir; and on the day following his decease, Philip re-entered Madrid, and resumed the authority he had resigned, though without positively announcing his intention of permanently exercising the regal power. There can be little doubt, however, that he intended to do so when he arrived in Madrid. The queen, Grimaldo, and many of the foreign ministers, urged him to do so; but he was met with unexpected opposition by the council of Castille: and the doubt which their proceedings suggested to his mind was strengthened, so as to become an objection almost insuperable, by the stern religious zeal of his confessor, Bermudez. That priest represented to the monarch, that the solemn vow which he had taken was not to be renounced; and a junta of divines confirmed the opinion of the confessor.

The queen, however, found means to array opinion against opinion; to bring a greater force of clerical argument in favour of the assumption than had been arrayed against it; and to engage the high authority of the papal nuncio in favour of her own views. Philip's conscience being thus quieted, he solemnly took upon himself the royal authority which he had resigned eight months before; and the queen now reigned supreme. Grimaldo's authority had been shaken by the assaults of Ripperda and of the French party; the rest of the ministers were all either dismissed or changed, and a new administration was formed of men showing no very great capacity, and still less energy of character. Such a state of things was the most favourable that could be conceived for the views of Ripperda; but a negotiation was now going on, the tedious

length and constantly recurring difficulties of which were destined to call the enterprising genius of the Dutch statesman into activity, and to reward him for his persevering efforts, by the attainment of that authority for which he had so long striven.

To enter into all the long details of the negotiations which took place at Cambray in consequence of the accession of Spain to the quadruple alliance on the fall of Alberoni, would be tedious and unnecessary in this place. It may be sufficient to say, that, although the king of Spain fulfilled without hesitation his part of the conditions imposed upon the belligerents by the allied powers, and, recalling his troops from Sicily, placed the duke of Savoy in possession of Sardinia, the emperor, to evade the fulfilment of the terms to which he had agreed with his too partial allies — though he did not positively refuse to acknowledge the right of the son of the queen of Spain to the succession of Parma and Tuscany — yet took such measures with the minor powers of Italy, the pope, the duke of Parma, and the grand duke of Tuscany, as to throw constant impediments in the way of the Spanish prince, and to keep open a claim to those duchies in case of the death of either of the present sovereigns. From this and various other circumstances, a thousand difficulties arose, in which the interests of the great maritime powers became complicated with those of Spain and the empire in such a manner as to render the negotiations extremely difficult.

Those negotiations, however, were protracted to an enormous and unnecessary length, and deviated rapidly into the consideration of a thousand pitiful subjects unworthy of the attention of men of extended minds. Eager and impatient by disposition, the queen of Spain had soon grown tired of such tedious proceedings, and had endeavoured to prevail upon the maritime states to permit her to employ a more summary proceeding for the purpose of forcing the emperor into the fulfilment of his engagements, and to send

her son into Italy with a sufficient Spanish force to take possession of the principal fortresses in the territories which had been guaranteed to him by the quadruple alliance. These wishes, however, were vehemently resisted; and the negotiations entered into for the purpose of giving them effect promised to be as long as those which they were intended to supersede.

Day by day, during her retreat at St. Ildefonso, the queen's impatience had become more and more vehement; and at length, indignant at the indifference of those who professed to be friendly to her interests, and irritated by the incessant recurrence of diplomatic delays, she determined to cut short the whole transaction, by opening a separate communication with the emperor himself. In this purpose she had been strengthened by the advice of one who, during her seclusion at St. Ildefonso, had, as I have shown, laboured incessantly to obtain her favour and good opinion. So far, indeed, had Ripperda succeeded in this object, that he had become, in some degree, we are told, her secret counsellor and confidant; and it was by his advice, there is much reason to believe, that she guided her conduct in the difficult moments which succeeded the death of the young king Louis. At all events it is certain that, although still without any share in the ministry, Ripperda appeared high in the favour of the queen from the moment her husband resumed the reins of authority.

To Ripperda we must attribute the first idea of a more intimate union between Spain and Austria, and the extinction of the feuds which had now continued from the beginning of the century, by an alliance of the house of Austria with the Bourbon dynasty of Spain. The suggestion was by far too wise to be neglected. The personal communications of Ripperda with the emperor, which might have appeared as a suspicious circumstance at any other moment, and might have made his intermediation be regarded as unsafe both by the king and queen, now proved one of his strongest

recommendations for the delicate task of opening a secret negotiation with the house of Austria. That which he had himself proposed, he was now deputed to execute ; and he was furnished with authority to conclude a marriage between don Ferdinand, now recognised as prince of the Asturias, and one of the archduchesses ; a second marriage between don Carlos and another of the emperor's daughters ; to arrange the terms of a separate peace between Spain and the Empire, and to obtain for don Carlos the emperor's immediate recognition of his reversionary right to the duchies of Parma and Tuscany.

Full of so important and delicate an enterprise, Ripperda made all his preparations to set off for Vienna without loss of time ; but, while he did so, he neglected no means of securing his influence at the court of Madrid during his absence : and there is much reason to believe that the post of prime minister was held out to his hopes even before he quitted Spain, in order to stimulate his zeal for the accomplishment of the purpose which he was despatched to execute. Whether the king and queen really did give him this expectation or not, there can be no doubt whatsoever that Ripperda himself looked forward to it ; and that, to show his competence for that station, to dazzle the mind of the monarch with those great schemes which he knew that Philip loved to contemplate, and to evince the powerful and comprehensive character of his own mind, he drew up before he went a general scheme of administration, calculated to work out, could it have been carried into effect, a complete regeneration of the commercial and manufacturing resources of Spain. His own intimate acquaintance with such subjects enabled him, while suggesting a variety of measures really practicable and beneficial to the country, to give a colouring of probability to vast but uncertain results.

He proposed to establish a bank at Madrid, the capital of which was in reality to be formed from a number of funds intended for charitable purposes ; from all bequests

and donations bestowed upon ecclesiastical establishments, and destined by the donors to increase the revenues of churches or communities. To these were to be added whatever sums individuals chose to deposit in the bank, and an interest of five per cent. was to be allowed upon every thing paid in. Having provided this centre of commercial action, he proposed his general plan regarding trade, dividing it into three principal heads of consideration — the trade from Spain, by Cadiz, to the Indies ; the *asiento*, or trade in negroes ; and the contraband trade, which had already encroached so desperately upon the regular commerce of the country. In regard to the first of these heads, he proposed a number of regulations, which can only be briefly touched upon here. A constant communication between Cadiz and Buenos Ayres was to be kept up by the periodical despatch of twelve royal ships and twelve galleons, all loaded with merchandise. A Spanish company, trading to the Philippines, was to be established ; and various parts of the plan proposed under the administration of Alberoni were to be adopted, for the purpose of forming a regular course of trade between Cadiz, Chili, the Philippines, China, and the East.

Regulations were to be adopted, for the purpose of insuring that throughout the whole of the commercial system no articles of trade should be drawn from England ; every thing which Spain itself could not supply was to be obtained from countries considered as friendly ; regular returns of all goods exported to America were to be made to the government ; foreign manufacturers were to be induced to settle in Spain ; and all inhabitants of Spanish colonies lending their names as a cover to English traders were to be punished with death ; while every sort of vexation, annoyance, and impediment, was to be thrown in the way of the English commerce, which it was his great object to diminish, if not to destroy. The Dutch, indeed, were to receive particular favours, in order to keep their interests separated from that of England. Factories

also were to be established for the purpose of trading to the north ; and fisheries were to be formed for the purpose of supplying Spain with an article previously obtained from other nations.

To guard and promote this commerce, a new dock-yard was to be constructed at Ferrol ; and an arsenal and fortifications were to be added, to enable it to resist any attack. In regard to the trade in negroes, acting upon the same system as in the former regulations, Ripperda proposed a number of measures for retarding and annoying the English. And respecting the contraband trade, a variety of exactions were to be made by the king of Spain, which would have excluded from the Indian seas the ships of every other state. A number of light squadrons were to be so stationed as to range the whole of the South American coast, aided by a land force of 5000 foot and 1000 horse. Means for supporting these establishments were pointed out, and gradual measures adopted for excluding, in proportion as the manufactures and commerce of Spain furnished a sufficient supply, all articles of foreign production ; while the king and court were to lead the way in encouraging articles of home fabrication, and the governors of towns, ports, and provinces were to do every thing in their power to discourage the use of goods manufactured in foreign countries.

Such is an imperfect outline of the plan of Ripperda ; and, from the stimulus given by such means to internal industry and external commerce, he boldly asserted that in a very few years such an increase of revenue would take place, so great would be the spirit of enterprise and industry excited, such a nursery of seamen would be formed, and so much national energy engendered, that the Spanish monarch would be enabled to maintain with ease an army of 130,000 men ; a fleet of 100 ships of the line, and frigates ; and that, besides this, a surplus revenue to a very considerable amount would be annually poured into the treasury, to

remove all incumbrances left by the past, and provide against all extraordinary calls for the future.

After presenting this plan to the king, and enjoying the gratification which it produced in the sanguine and inconsiderate mind of Philip, Ripperda set out privately for Vienna, in the month of October, 1724. He arrived at the capital of the Austrian states, and taking a small house in one of the suburbs, continued to reside there, under the title of count Pfaffenberg. Immediately on his arrival, he gave notice thereof to the imperial ministers, by whom he was already expected, and nightly conferences were directly opened between him and count Sinzendorff, the Austrian chancellor. It would seem that Ripperda conducted the negotiations with diplomatic skill, for a multitude of difficulties were to be overcome; the demands of Spain were still high, the pretensions and prejudices of the emperor were still strong, he was surrounded by skilful and experienced diplomatists, and Ripperda had to contend alone with all the subtilty and penetration of the Austrian cabinet.

He was himself, however, eloquent, persuasive, and insinuating; and at the same time, as occasion served, could assume the tone of boldness, or firmness, or mystery; but besides all these personal qualifications, he was furnished with a means of persuasion infinitely influential in a corrupt and venal court. In the space of three months he is said to have distributed to various members of the imperial cabinet the sum of 590,000 pistoles; and it is even asserted that the privy purse of the Germanic Cæsar himself benefited by the splendid bribes of the Spanish envoy. By these means he removed many difficulties, and gained many important points in the negotiation; but on the question of a marriage between one of the archduchesses and don Carlos, son of the queen of Spain, unexpected obstacles were suddenly raised on the part of the empress, and on the part of the princess herself.

She had been promised, it would seem, and was attached to, the duke of Lorraine; and though Rip-

perda had contrived to bribe all the imperial ministers, with the sole noble exception of prince Eugène, such means could have no effect with the archduchess ; and, as usual in similar cases, a thousand new difficulties instantly sprang up around the first impediment that was thrown in the way of the negotiation. Ripperda, however eager to bring the transaction to a conclusion, was no less desirous of rendering that conclusion advantageous and honourable to Spain ; and the obstacles that rose up in his path might either have delayed his proceedings for a great length of time, or have rendered them ineffectual altogether, had not the commands of Philip suddenly removed all his difficulties, by directing him to concede points which he would never have ventured to yield without the express orders of the monarch he represented.

During his absence, a great and extraordinary change had come over the feelings of the court of Madrid, produced by an event of which we must take some notice. On the renewal of amicable relations between the courts of France and Spain, the daughter of Philip, then in her fourth year, had been sent into France as the future bride of Louis XV. ; and at the same time, don Carlos, the king of Spain's second son, had been contracted to mademoiselle de Beaujolois, daughter of the duke of Orleans. During the life of the regent, no idea seems ever to have been entertained of making any change in the proposed arrangements, at least on the part of France ; but when, upon his death, the authority he possessed fell into the hands of the duke of Bourbon, the delicate health of the young king, a violent fit of illness with which he was seized, and the apparent evils of a disputed succession in the event of his dying without heirs, rendered the whole government and the country extremely anxious that, instead of a mere child, a bride should be procured for him whose age afforded the prospect of the direct line of monarchs being continued without interruption.

The proceedings of the French court in this affair were conducted with as much secrecy as those of Spain in

regard to the treaty with Austria: various pretences were found for putting off the act of affiancing the king to his young bride; and while the Spanish court was amused by every means that diplomatic skill could supply, the eyes of the French ministers were turned to all the different courts of Europe in search of a fitting wife for Louis XV. In no court, at that time existing, was there to be found one such as they desired; but in the small household of Stanislaus Letzinski, the exiled king of Poland, was discovered the person destined to become the future queen of France. The proposal was accordingly made, and accepted with joy; and although towards the time when the whole transaction was complete the queen of Spain is said to have become alarmed by some rumours of the purposes of France, the assurances of the French court that Louis should in a very short time be betrothed to her daughter removed her apprehensions.

There can be no doubt that when the abbé de Livry, with tears and protestations, delivered the letters in excuse of the French court, with which he was charged by the duke of Bourbon, both the king and the queen of Spain were taken completely by surprise. Their indignation was equal to their astonishment: the violence of the queen's temper broke forth unrestrained. The French ministers and consuls were ordered to quit the country without a moment's delay; the king declared eternal enmity against France; and, sending for the ambassador of Great Britain, told him that he was about to direct his plenipotentiaries at Cambray to reject all farther mediation on the part of France, and to put the interests of Spain entirely in the hands of Great Britain.

At the same time, the king of Spain commanded Ripperda to hasten as much as possible the treaty with the emperor, to wave all difficult and contested points, and to bring the negotiation to a close, on almost any terms. Whatever hopes were entertained of detaching George I. from his alliance with France were soon found to be vain. He declined to interfere be-

tween Spain and Germany, without the co-operation of the court of Paris ; and he spoke in such terms as to draw upon England a great share of the indignation which had been excited by France. More and more pressing became the king's orders to Ripperda ; and while France and Great Britain were thus day by day driving Spain more into the arms of Austria, their conduct to the emperor, in regard to the company of Ostend, and various other points, both affecting his pride and his interests, rendered him very willing to receive the overtures of the prince who had so long been his rival and his enemy.

For many months Ripperda had now resided incognito at Vienna, and conducted negotiations of the utmost importance, with a degree of secrecy which baffled the penetration of all the diplomatists at the imperial court. An envoy from the duke of Holstein, indeed, about four months after Ripperda had arrived, communicated to the British minister at Vienna, that a person, supposed to be a Dutchman, and who greatly resembled the baron Ripperda, well known by his negotiations and intrigues in Spain, had resided for some months in one of the suburbs, and held long and secret conferences with the chancellor by night. This, however, was all that transpired, till, in the beginning of May, 1725, while France and England were still treating the remonstrances and indignation of Spain with cool indifference, the whole political world of Europe was thrown into consternation and astonishment by the tidings, that without the mediation, sanction, or knowledge of any other power, a comprehensive and extraordinary treaty between the king of Spain and the emperor had been signed at Vienna, through the agency of Ripperda.

This treaty* consisted in fact of three different parts ; the first of which might be considered as a treaty of succession, regulating the pretensions of the different sove-

* I have, in this place, considered the treaties of Vienna as forming one instrument, although there were, in fact, three separate treaties signed at different times with a short interval.

reigns and their families to the various territories which had been in dispute between them. The second part was a treaty of commerce, which, by sanctioning all the commercial efforts of the house of Austria, and by conceding to the subjects of that crown extraordinary privileges and advantages in the trade with Spain, was in the strongest degree opposed to the principles and views of the maritime states. The third comprised the secret articles of the treaty, which professed to be perfectly defensive in their nature, but which no one can doubt were offensive in the highest degree, both towards France and England. The mystery attending these secret articles has never been fully cleared up ; but it is evident that Austria and Spain were, by a singular revolution of feeling, united for the purpose of depressing the power of those very nations which had so long supported the cause of the emperor against the Spanish monarch, and that the whole strength of the two states was to be arrayed in opposition to France and England.

It was stipulated, also, between Ripperda and the emperor, though whether by any authentic document or not I cannot ascertain, that don Carlos was to obtain the hand of an archduchess, and that the arms of the confederates were not to be laid down till Gibraltar and Minorca were restored to Spain. Nothing can express the joy which spread through the whole of Spain, and which especially manifested itself at the court of Madrid, on the announcement of the signature of these treaties. All the native arrogance of the Spanish character broke forth, nothing was talked of but the punishment to be inflicted upon the nations which had so long kept the efforts of the Spanish monarch in check ; and Ripperda himself, hasty and presumptuous in all his proceedings, gave way to the most indecorous and empty boasting.

He soon received his formal appointment, however, as ambassador to the court of Vienna, and made his public entrance into the city with a degree of ostentation and splendour suited to his character.

Raised to the rank of a duke, and anxious to enjoy all the honours and dignities which were in store for him in Spain, Ripperda brought any remaining negotiations in Vienna to a conclusion as fast as possible ; but nevertheless, before he quitted that capital, by a display of self-sufficient imprudence equally remarkable, though strangely contrasted with the caution and dexterity of his preceding conduct, he contrived to alarm all the other European powers, and to convince them that the treaties of peace and commerce, which were all that had yet been published, were not without a secret appendix, dangerous, if not hostile, to other nations. He not only vaunted his power to injure France and England, but he held out mysterious threats ; he announced great schemes and important purposes ; and he held secret meetings with the celebrated duke of Wharton, then residing at Vienna as agent for the exiled house of Stuart.

Such tidings reaching the ears of the British government, led to a determination of seeking an immediate explanation from the court of Madrid ; and the British ambassador in that capital was directed to demand, whether the boasts of Ripperda, in regard to the restitution of Gibraltar and Minorca, were sanctioned by the authority of the king. At first there was some hesitation in regard to the reply ; but all diplomatic evasions were soon brought to an end by the impetuosity of the queen ; and the British government found that the threats of Ripperda, however imprudent, were justified by the purposes of Spain and Austria. As soon as he had conducted his negotiations to a conclusion, Ripperda left his son, a mere boy, to fulfil the duties of ambassador at Vienna ; and, taking leave of the emperor without any formal visit to the ministers at the imperial court, he set out for Spain, attended by a single servant.

As the road through France might have proved dangerous to one who had just effected such an alliance against that country, Ripperda took the way of Italy ; and, notwithstanding his unostentatious mode

of travelling, was received with extraordinary honours, especially at Genoa. He could not refrain, as he went along, from giving way to the triumphant vanity which his successful negotiation inspired. At Genoa he talked loudly of the purposes of Spain and Austria; and on his disembarkation at Barcelona, he displayed a weak and indiscreet communicativeness, narrating to persons who were certainly not those in whom he was bound to place any great diplomatic confidence the whole particulars of his negotiation at Vienna. He declared, amongst other things, that the emperor had 150,000 men ready to take the field against France and England; that an equal number would be ready in six months, if occasion required it. He noticed, also, the alliance formed between France, England, and Prussia, in opposition to the treaty of Vienna; and he spoke as if Spain and Austria, united, could in a single campaign annihilate the forces of their opponents.

Hurrying on from Barcelona as fast as possible, he reached Madrid late on the 11th of December, and, without changing his dress, hastened to the palace, where, passing the secretary Grimaldo in the anteroom without deigning to notice him, he was admitted to an audience of the king and queen, and remained with them for several hours. On the following morning, Ripperda was nominated secretary of state in room of Grimaldo; and a notification was sent to the other members of the ministry, as well as to all foreign ambassadors at the court of Madrid, to address their communications to him alone. This was, in fact, the announcement of his elevation to the post of prime minister, and at the same time he was appointed a grandee of the first class. Not contented with the high and important post he filled, and which gave him the general superintendence of all the other departments in the state, Ripperda determined to unite almost all the various ministerial offices in his own person; and in less than two months he had monopolised the superintendence of the marine, the Indies, the

courts of justice, and the war department. But with his triumph began his difficulties, and the last step of his rise was the first of his fall.

The alliance between France, Prussia, and the maritime powers, day by day grew more formidable; the stipulation, if stipulation it really was, on the part of the emperor, to bestow the hand of the archduchess upon don Carlos, was not fulfilled, and the queen pressed Ripperda to hasten its accomplishment. The large subsidies, however, which had been promised by Spain to the emperor could not be paid, and, consequently, a very good excuse existed for delaying, if not refusing, to fulfil that part of the contract between the courts of Vienna and Madrid which related to the marriage. Still the tone of Ripperda was loud and confident; every day he detailed new schemes, each more replete with visionary reforms and splendid enterprises than the other; and he talked to all who were brought in contact with him, as if no power of opposition to his will existed in the surrounding nations, as if no impediments were to be encountered from those below him in Spain itself, as if no control was to be exercised over his actions by those above.

In all these matters, while attempting to deceive others, it is probable that to a great extent he deceived himself. His perfect self-confidence, indeed, the wide and brilliant nature of his plans, a certain technical familiarity with detail, and a specious eloquence, the result, perhaps, of his reliance on his own powers, deceived a great part of the Spanish nation, and led them to believe him, for a time, to be a man fitted, not only to form vast and general plans of amelioration, by a great and comprehensive intellect, but also to execute them with precision and success, aided by an intimate knowledge of every minute branch of foreign and domestic policy.

Nevertheless, in the very midst of his first popularity, in the height of his power, and the acme of his favour, the seeds of destruction were germinating below, above, around him. By dismissing from lucrative posts and

honourable employments many men of a certain degree of talent, influence, and authority, and monopolising the offices which they had filled, he raised up against himself a powerful party, eager for revenge, without creating for himself the support of another body of men, whose political existence was identified with the permanence of his power. The reforms which he introduced into many branches of the administration, the useless posts he swept away, the number of salaries that he diminished, the immense pension list which he annihilated, for the purpose of providing supplies to meet his vast political engagements, or to furnish the means of his own ostentatious luxury, created against him, throughout the whole of Spain, a tempest of clamour, from which he could not shelter himself under the plea of pure and patriotic intentions, and against which he was not supported by any general conviction of his honesty or honour.

Thus was he assailed from below ; but the danger from above was going on with more sure, more rapid, though more secret steps. He was the servant of two sovereigns who were less calculated than any other that ever lived to give the firm and steadfast support which is always necessary to any minister who attempts to execute great and beneficial measures. The king, weak, suspicious, and jealous of his authority, never confided fully in the talents of any one, because he had no capability himself of estimating genius ; never relied on the honesty of any one without employing secret agents to watch, report, and comment on the conduct of those he appeared to trust ; never resigned into the hands of any one that unlimited authority which he was himself incompetent to wield, without being jealous of their use of his own gift, and without desiring to take back that which he had unwillingly yielded.

The queen, on the other hand, ambitious, impetuous, and daring, sought but the accomplishment of her own plans, and gave no support to any one who did not strive for that object. Although possessed of sufficient talent to discover and admire genius, she had

not sufficient genius herself to persevere even in a course that she approved, against the thousand obstacles and difficulties which lie in man's way towards any great object of desire or endeavour. Like so many others in the world, she attributed want of success or any impediment in obtaining it, not to the inherent difficulties of the enterprises she undertook, but to a want of talent in those to whom she intrusted them. Thus her favour was only to be gained by flattering her wishes with hopes, her confidence was only secured by success, and her enmity or contempt was certain to follow delay or failure.

With the king, Ripperda's favour had been sapped even before he returned from Vienna. His plans had been exposed by Philip to the scrutiny of those secret advisers whom he did not trust fully, even when he consulted them, but whose opinions he made the test of the views of others in whom he affected to place more public confidence. Amongst these men were the two Sicilian abbés, Caraccioli and Platania, who afterwards published an account of the administration of Ripperda, and they with others, probably well understanding that the king's wish was to discover errors, did not fail to point out a number of flaws in the plans of the minister. His errors and his faults were continually aggravated to the royal ear; and Philip, even while he was loading him with favours, and suffering him to absorb all the power of the state, was watching his proceedings with dull and incomprehensive suspicion, and marking his ostentatious exercise of power with all the jealousy of a weak and inferior mind.

The queen, at the same time, as we have before said, urged him on the matter of the marriage of don Carlos; and obtaining nothing but evasion and excuses, became impatient, suspicious, and indignant. Such were the dangers from above which hung over the head of Ripperda; and around him, on every side, appeared difficulties and obstacles which it would have required far greater political sagacity than he possessed

to have overcome. The alliance of England, France, and Prussia, generally known by the name of the Han-over alliance, every day gained additional strength ; and the threats which Ripperda had held out, in order to intimidate some of the confederates, as well as the inducements with which he attempted to lure others, only served to consolidate and extend their union. The knowledge of the engagements which he had formed with the emperor to support the Ostend company, and other commercial speculations, calculated to interfere with the trade of the Dutch, only made each of the states of the United Provinces the better disposed to support the views of England and France, and withdraw from all connection with Spain. The threat of seating the pretender on the throne of Great Britain, of attacking the continental dominions of the king of England, and of recovering Gibraltar by force of arms, only awakened the more the vigilance and activity of the British ministers, and called up in the people that patriotic spirit of resistance which instantly supplied the means of national defence.

His efforts in France were equally unsuccessful ; and in the mean time he found that his sanguine calculations, in regard to the imperial forces which could be brought in aid of Spain, were as fallacious as his computation of the means which Spain could supply to subsidise the emperor. In the midst of this state of things, Konigseg, the imperial ambassador, arrived in Madrid, and was received with joy and gratulation. Ripperda, however, soon found that his coming was to be in no degree beneficial to him ; and that one of the first objects that Konigseg was directed to accomplish was to obtain payment of the large sums promised to the emperor. This was, of course, a difficult matter for Ripperda to meet, in his conferences with the imperial ambassador ; but a subject equally disagreeable to count Konigseg himself was the unfulfilled promise of the archduchess's hand for the son of the queen of Spain. These two topics, of course, rendered the interviews of the ambassador

and the minister painful to both, and a state of covert hostility soon succeeded to their first demonstrations of friendship.

On one point, however, the interests of Ripperda and of the imperial court were united, and compelled Konigseg to act vigorously with him ; this was in regard to the imposition put upon the queen respecting the arch-duchess ; and although the ambassador very well knew, and Ripperda soon perceived, that the emperor had not the slightest intention of fulfilling his promise in this respect, yet they combined to carry on the deceit with Elizabeth, and to frame excuses for a delay in the gratification of her wishes,—a delay which, had it not been for the assistance of Konigseg, might have overthrown the power of Ripperda long before his fall took place. In the mean while, the minister used every effort to fulfil his engagement with the imperial court, which represented continually that it could not subsidise the catholic princes of the empire without vast pecuniary assistance from Spain. He drained the treasury ; he abolished, as we have said, innumerable pensions, places, and salaries ; and, with difficulty, he induced the ambassador to wait for the arrival of treasure from South America, ere he publicly remonstrated on the delay of the stipulated payments.

At the same time, he pressed the English government to restore Gibraltar, in order, if possible, to obtain the accomplishment of even a part of the bright hopes he had held out to the king and queen. To give some effect to his remonstrances, and to show that his threats were not held out in vain, he laid a plan for invading England, and for seating the pretender upon the throne of Great Britain. To make this attempt, he was urged by a variety of considerations, although he felt that in so doing he was hurrying on the commencement of hostilities, for which neither Spain nor Austria was prepared. The restoration of the catholic and exiled house of Stuart had ever been one of the chief schemes of Philip's visionary enthusiasm. It had thus been one

of the secret articles in the treaty of Vienna, which gave him the greatest pleasure ; and Ripperda saw that, sooner or later, it must be attempted if he would preserve the confidence of either the king or queen. The exiles from Great Britain which crowded the court of Madrid were all eager in urging a course which they believed might restore them to their native land. The duke of Wharton, who had entered into long negotiations with Ripperda at Vienna, had followed him to Madrid, and pressed earnestly for the fulfilment of the promises which had been made to him ; at the same time, the jesuits and other bigotted bodies in the catholic church began to express doubts of the sincerity of Ripperda's conversion, to call him the new Christian, and to sharpen the arrows of religious persecution to be aimed at him in the future.

All these circumstances combined to make Ripperda hurry the measures which he had always determined to employ at some after period, in order to gratify the king, to distract the attention of the people, and to give the bigotted catholics a proof of his sincerity in favour of his new religion. For this purpose, a force of 12,000 men was collected in Galicia, a number of ships were gathered together in the different ports of Spain ; six men of war were equipped at Cadiz ; some Russian vessels were also engaged for the enterprise, and were sent to the ports on the northern coast of the Peninsula ; while a quantity of arms was bought for the purpose of equipping the various levies which the agents of the pretender were busy in making amongst the exiles from Ireland and Scotland. The attention of Stanhope, the English ambassador at Madrid, was of course attracted by such movements ; and he took notice particularly of the appearance of a known agent of the Stuart family, the duke of Wharton, in the Spanish capital, and the distinction with which he had been there received.

By protesting the innocence of his communications with Wharton, and asserting that the arms collected had not been bought by him, or with his connivance, Ripperda endeavoured to lull Stanhope ; who nevertheless took

measures, it is said, to purchase these military stores from the parties to whom they had been pledged by the agents of the pretender. That unfortunate prince had himself no funds even to aid the enterprise ; and the Spanish treasury, we have already seen, was completely exhausted. Ripperda, however, in order to furnish sufficient supplies for the expedition which he meditated, had calculated upon the appropriation of a fund, called the fund of St. Justus, which had ever been held sacred as the property of widows and orphans. He had already, in the various schemes which he had laid before the Spanish monarch, appropriated this fund to different purposes ; and, in fact, its very existence, untouched in the midst of much national distress, had seemed to offer him a mine of wealth with which his wild imagination sported at its leisure.

Although not a year before the 9,000,000 of dollars whereof it consisted were to form the principal fund of the great state bank which he proposed to establish, he now, without the slightest hesitation, determined to use it in order to seat the pretender on the throne of Great Britain, promising to those concerned in its preservation to reimburse it without fail as soon as his great financial projects could be carried into execution. The fund, however, could not be touched without the consent of the council of Castille ; and the president thereof was applied to by the queen, in order to obtain his sanction in the first instance. After some hesitation and deliberation, however, the president not only positively refused his consent, but declared that the measure was equally unjust and imprudent.

Thus thwarted in the outset, and unable to proceed with the expedition for want of funds, Ripperda had a very difficult part to play in order to baffle Stanhope the British ambassador, and to account equally for the assembling and dismissal of the large body of troops which had been gathered together on the northern coast of Spain. To draw on open hostilities at a moment when the country could not furnish sufficient sums to

supply a small expedition was, of course, to be avoided by every exertion, and Ripperda did not manage this transaction without some degree of diplomatic skill. Taking advantage of some of the necessary preparations of England for her own defence, Ripperda affected to have received intimation that an attack was meditated by Great Britain upon the coasts of Spain ; and in consequence he sent, in the name of the king, to demand a solemn disavowal, on the part of Mr. Stanhope, of any hostile designs against the Spanish monarchy. Stanhope without hesitation made the disavowal, as Ripperda knew he would ; the matter was ostentatiously published throughout the capital, and the troops were recalled from Galicia and Biscay.

Towards England, Ripperda, finding himself unable to carry menaces into acts, now changed his course of demeanour, and endeavoured to soothe and tranquillise, as much as he had before striven to overawe and to irritate ; but the British government still pursued the same course which it had adopted from the first, and continued to make a firm display of its power, and resolution to meet the efforts of Spain and the empire, without courting a rupture, or retaliating threats. All that Ripperda endeavoured to effect in France, also, was rendered vain, by the adherence of both of the parties contending for power to the alliance of England ; and a paper drawn up by the French secretary of state was transmitted to colonel Stanhope, in the absence of all French agents at Madrid, to present to the Spanish court. The substance of this paper was merely a declaration, on the part of France, of her firm union with England, but its public presentation to the king was enough to show Ripperda that all the hopes he had entertained of a re-union of the two branches of the Bourbon race were vain.

Every thing now evinced that, unless some great and extraordinary piece of good fortune occurred, the vast schemes and great promises of Ripperda must inevitably fall to the ground. The only power that seemed likely at all to effect even a diversion in his

favour was Russia, whose jealousy of England continued undiminished, and who was going on increasing her military and naval force so as daily to assume a more hostile aspect. There can be very little doubt, indeed, that her purposes at the time were inimical to the reigning family in Great Britain, and her wishes favourable to the house of Stuart; but whether there was any connection between the preparations in which she was engaged, and those which had been made by Ripperda in Galicia, has never been clearly ascertained. If such a connection did exist, and if the scheme originated with the Spanish minister, it would display a better organised political plan than any other which has been attributed to him.* For, with the large military and naval force which Russia and Spain could have brought into the field, with the multitude of the disaffected which existed in Great Britain at the time, the invasion would have been most formidable, the campaign probably bloody and destructive, and the event uncertain, though, in all likelihood, unfavourable to the Spanish arms.

There is no proof, however, that any plan of co-oper-

* Had he been able to obtain possession of the fund of St. Justus, the sum of 9,000,000 of dollars, thus placed at his disposal, would have enabled him to carry forward his scheme of invasion with greater vigour than had been displayed in any Spanish expedition for many years. The co-operation of Russia would have put at his command a very imposing force; the first success of Spain would have led forward Austria also into the field; there was, at least, a reasonable probability that the prime minister of France, a cardinal and a zealot, would not have dared to interfere to maintain a protestant family on the throne of Great Britain. Holland could scarcely be expected to give very vigorous assistance to the rival maritime power, and the efforts of Prussia, in all probability, would have been confined to such operations in Germany as might tend to her own aggrandisement. Such were some of the probabilities on which Ripperda had to reckon for success; and though those who may know intimately the history of Great Britain, and the character of her inhabitants, may feel assured that, with all these chances, the Spanish enterprise would not have been eventually successful; yet it was not at all unreasonable for a foreigner, obtaining his views through intricate and prejudiced channels, to believe that, with such circumstances in his favour, he might seat the Stuart family once more upon the throne of Great Britain. The fund of St. Justus, however, was withheld, there is some reason to believe, by means of the intrigues and diplomatic skill of colonel Stanhope, who, with the most cold and phlegmatic exterior, united indefatigable activity, foresight, and judgment. It has been suspected that he had agents in almost every department of the Spanish administration, and that it was by his influence that the president of the council of Castille was induced to ask the advice of persons by whom he was led to put his veto against the employment of the fund for any other than its original purposes.

ation between Russia and Spain in an attack upon these islands existed, except, indeed, inasmuch as several Russian vessels appeared in aid of the Spanish fleet on the northern coast of the Peninsula. And scarcely had Ripperda been obliged to abandon his proposed invasion, when a British fleet under sir Charles Wager sailed, to keep in check the menacing power in the north. At the same time rumours reached Madrid of the preparation of two more fleets in the British ports; the one under admiral Hosier, destined, in case of war, to interrupt her American trade; the other, under admiral Jennings, to cruise upon the coast of Spain. All these facts daily sapped the foundation of Ripperda's favour and authority; but the queen, still buoyed up with the hope of obtaining the archduchess for her son, and of carrying forward her other ambitious views in favour of her family, still supported Ripperda, long after the king himself was determined on his fall. Urged by her husband to consent to his destruction, yet clinging pertinaciously to the hopes with which he had inspired her, and torn by the impetuosity of her struggling passions, she passed the greater part of several days in tears.

In the mean time, Ripperda, struggling against so many adverse circumstances, wild, scheming, visionary, as he certainly was, gave evidence, in one or two instances, of sagacity and vigour of mind, which, had they been guided constantly by prudence and judgment, and supported by private and political honesty, would have made him indeed that great man which he believed himself to be. Amongst all the various kinds of corruption which had disgraced, for many centuries, the internal government of Spain, none was more glaring or more detrimental, both to the immediate interests and moral character of the people, than the notorious corruption of all the courts of justice, and of the general police of the realm. Whatever was the importance of the suit, whatever was the absolute necessity of immediate decision, every step in legal proceedings was attended with great expense and long delays, which served to fill the pockets of the

judges and lawyers, and consummate the ruin of the unfortunate litigant. The evil had even extended to the highest court in the realm, which should in fact have acted as a check upon the others; and the council of Castille was no less famous for its delays than the rest. To root out this daily increasing ill, Ripperda obtained a decree that a general investigation and report should be drawn up of the number of causes pending in each of the courts in the king's dominions, of their nature, and the progress which had been made in them; and, also, that every month a regular return should be given in of the causes which had been terminated by a judgment, and of the progress made in all others. Had he added to this a commission for the especial purpose of inspecting such returns, and investigating constantly and strictly all the proceedings in the courts, he would undoubtedly have produced a reform most beneficial to the country. Instead of this, however, following his unwise plan of attributing to himself such a multitude of functions, as to embarrass and impede each other at every step, he at the same time promulgated another decree, which is not without suspicion of having been prompted by revenge. By it he called upon every one who felt that he had been wronged, either by the proceedings or the decision of any court of justice, to lay their cause immediately before the king through the intervention of the minister. This was, in fact, had it been possible to execute it, erecting a new tribunal without recognised forms or rules, and without responsibility; but the multitude of complaints that immediately poured in at once proved the absurdity of the plan, by rendering it impossible to decide upon the justice of any.

The state of the police in Spain was equally vicious with the judicial system. The alguazils, or police-officers, were left, without regular salaries, to prey upon the unfortunate victims whom it was, of course, their interest to entrap into crime, as well as to seize upon for punishment. The enormities which were committed in consequence of this fertile source of evil rendered it

scarcely credible that such a system should have been tolerated for ages in any civilised state. Ripperda now, however, showed his determination to put a stop to it ; and positively prohibited, with very severe denunciations of punishment, in case of disobedience, the demanding or receiving any perquisites, fees, or rewards whatsoever, by the officers of the police ; and, in recompence for what they thus lost, he promised them a regular and sufficient salary.

These measures, however, though undoubtedly beneficial and well designed, gained him no popularity with the people, whom he offended at the same time by endeavouring forcibly to drive them to industrious habits ; and raised up for him a new host of enemies in all the functionaries of every court of justice, or injustice, throughout the realm, the council of Castille leading the way, and marking him for opposition and attack. His own imprudence, however, his rash and loquacious nature, aided more than all in accomplishing his fall. Day by day some new act of indiscretion, some new words of imprudence, called upon him enmity, or excited ridicule, or courted contempt.

To the confessor of the king he is said one day to have exclaimed, "Remember, father, that your only business is to give your penitent absolution." On another occasion he is reported to have declared, with a blasphemous levity equally disgusting and dangerous, that he had six good friends in the world—God, the Virgin Mary, the emperor, the empress, and the king and queen of Spain. On another occasion, some gamekeepers in the service of the prince of the Asturias having shot a dog belonging to Ripperda's wife, for trespassing on some preserved ground, were immediately arrested by order of the minister. The prince complained to the king his father, in presence of Ripperda ; and, on the minister attempting to interrupt him, exclaimed sternly, "I am speaking to the king."

For some weeks before his fall, Ripperda was alone supported by the influence of the queen ; but, as tales

of his insolence and presumption, of his indiscretion and imprudence, daily reached her ears, while the hopes with which he had buoyed her up remained unfulfilled, and none of his schemes appeared to have advanced a single step, she, too, began to grow weary of the falling minister, and the moment was eagerly seized to hurry on his destruction. A regular cabal had by this time been formed against him, at the head of which were the marquis of Castellar, don Joseph Patiño, Ariaza, Monteleone, and others. The two first of these, however, deserve the most particular notice, both from their great talents, and from their having been the principal instruments in effecting Ripperda's fall.

They, as well as most of the other persons now arrayed against him, had been members of the former administration which he had displaced. They were the only persons whom, as he very well knew, he had any occasion to fear on the score of talent and experience; and he had consequently taken care, as soon as he had appropriated to himself the offices they had formerly possessed, to furnish them with employments at a distance from the Spanish capital. Castellar was accordingly appointed ambassador to Venice very shortly after Ripperda's return from Vienna, and an excuse was also found for sending his brother to Brussels. It would seem that the political sagacity of those two statesmen led them to divine, from the very first, that Ripperda's power would not be of very long duration, and they accordingly endeavoured to delay their departure as much as possible, trusting to witness or effect his fall ere they went. Supported by their own great talents, by a very powerful party in the state, by the two Sicilian abbés, and other secret counsellors of Philip, their project for overthrowing the power of Ripperda was formed under very favourable circumstances, and required nothing more but the countenance of the queen.

In order to obtain her support, they applied to a person who but for this incident would probably be unknown in history. A priest, named Domingo Valentine Guerra,

had been selected by Alberoni and D'Aubenton as the confessor of the queen ; and as that lady had within herself, in the impetuosity of her own disposition, and the fiery ardour of her ambition, a sufficient, if not superfluous, moving power, the minister and D'Aubenton had selected her spiritual adviser from a belief that he possessed the very opposite qualities to her own. He was supposed to be slow of understanding, if not stupid, bigotted, narrow-minded, ill-informed, and unambitious. During the administration of Alberoni he was never heard of ; and after his fall, the superior intellect of D'Aubenton kept him in insignificance : but when Bermudez succeeded to the French confessor, Domingo Guerra began to emerge from his obscurity ; and having, by suppleness, and all the cunning arts which such a mind could employ in such a situation, ingratiated himself with the queen, he became a person to be courted as his influence became known.

Ripperda had merely despised him ; and as long as the queen's confessor saw that the power of the minister was unshaken, he was contented to hate, without daring to injure, the duke. No sooner, however, did he find the fabric of Ripperda's greatness tottering to its fall, than he eagerly looked round for means to hasten his ruin. Those means were easily supplied to him by the discontented members of the dissolved cabinet ; and the political experience of the two Patiños enabled them to afford the confessor of the queen convincing arguments against every branch of the administration of Ripperda. Day by day new accusations were poured in against him ; hour by hour all his faults and his follies were exposed ; and the queen at length became convinced that her own interest as well as that of the state required his dismissal.

An attack from another quarter was concerted at the same time by Ripperda's enemies, in order to render their proceedings more sure ; and count Konigseg, the Austrian ambassador, was engaged to join his efforts to the cabal. The means that were taken for obtaining his support were the most solemn promises on the part

of the marquis of Castellar and his brother to fulfil all the engagements which Ripperda had made with the court of Austria, but which the penury of the Spanish treasury had prevented him from accomplishing. Konigseg demanded nothing better ; he seems to have entertained a degree of personal animosity towards Ripperda, and that animosity was greatly increased by perceiving that the minister, irritated by the continual applications of Austria, began to turn for aid to another quarter, and to court the Dutch and English ministers, though so strongly opposed to the commercial views of the imperial court.

The indignation of the Austrian minister now burst forth unrestrained ; and while his applications for the payment of the promised subsidies were made to the king himself, he forwarded the strongest representations against Ripperda's conduct to Vienna, and besought the emperor to remonstrate with the court of Spain on the conduct of its minister. In the mean time Ripperda was not without some intimation of his declining favour, nor without some suspicion of the quarter from which the most formidable attack was directed against him. The first notification of his approaching fall might have been gathered from the words of the queen, whose hasty spirit frequently betrayed her purposes ere they were matured. On one occasion, when Ripperda had obtained an audience, and, in answer to some application of Konigseg's, had represented the exhausted state of the realm, and the impossibility of procuring immediate supplies without destroying the future resources of the government, she demanded angrily, " What is that to you ? "

It is probable, also, that the knowledge of finance shown by Philip and his wife, in their discussions with the minister, led him to conclude that some better informed agent than either the confessor or any of the ministers whom he had left in power had supplied them with the means of criticising his statements. At all events, he showed the greatest uneasiness at the long

sojourn of the two Patiños in the Spanish capital, and the greatest anxiety to hasten their departure on the missions which he had assigned to them. They had by this time exhausted every excuse for farther delay ; and at length, by a peremptory order, Ripperda endeavoured to free himself from the presence of two such dangerous rivals. The plans of the two brothers, however, were by this time sufficiently mature to enable them to resist ; and, in order to secure themselves against all danger, they obtained a private counter-order from the king, authorising them to remain in Madrid.

The blow which was to deprive Ripperda of his political power in Spain was now not long delayed. Konigseg at length received from the emperor a formal letter of remonstrance on the conduct of Ripperda, which he was directed to lay before the king of Spain. In this document the indiscretion of the Spanish minister, in having revealed to the English ambassador several of the secret articles of the treaty of Vienna, was commented upon in the severest terms ; the evils already produced, and the dangers likely to ensue, were clearly pointed out, and any lingering wish which the queen might entertain to retain a minister who had filled her mind with vast hopes and expectations, was done away by the representations of the imperial court. The fall of Ripperda was determined ; but, as if the whole court felt apprehensions of a man, who had so lately dazzled and surprised them by the boldness and novelty of his views, and only gained courage to act against him with severity as they proceeded from step to step, he was not hurled down by one blow, but was followed with increasing rigour as he fell lower and lower.

On the 12th of May, 1726, it was notified to him that the king, believing that the accumulation of offices in his person must be too burdensome for the powers of any one man, had determined to relieve him from the department of finance. But, though softened by such an excuse, Ripperda felt the blow severely ; and, looking round for the enemy who had dealt it, naturally fixed

his eyes upon the Austrian ambassador. He was, however, it would seem, more indignant than alarmed ; and, in a conference which he held that night with the British ambassador, colonel Stanhope, he launched forth into the most violent invectives against the court of Vienna, and showed every disposition to break the Austrian alliance, and seek an union with Great Britain.

Little aware how deeply his power was shaken, and doubtless trusting that Philip and the queen could not make up their minds to do without him, he applied for permission to resign all his offices. His request, however, was refused, which doubtless inspired him with new hopes ; but, at eleven o'clock at night, on the 14th of May, as he was retiring from a long audience of the king and queen, the marquis de Paz presented him with a royal decree, by which he was deprived of all his ministerial functions, and a pitiful pension of 3000 pistoles was bestowed upon him, as a testimony of the king's gratitude for various services he had rendered. Ripperda now gave way to mingled passions : rage, terror, indignation, disappointment, all took possession of the fallen minister.

The news of his disgrace, which spread through the city next morning, was hailed by the people with tumultuous joy ; frequent crowds surrounded his house ; some of his servants were maltreated and insulted ; and, either in real or assumed terror of the populace, he determined to seek a shelter which would equally protect him from the fury of the crowd, and, as he hoped, from the farther vengeance of the court. He first applied to Vandermeer, the Dutch ambassador, as his countryman and friend ; but the cautious plenipotentiary of a phlegmatic nation declined to give his support to the fallen Ripperda. He, however, advised him to apply to colonel Stanhope, and even, we are told, conveyed him to the hotel of the British embassy in his own carriage. This fact has given rise to a supposition that the Dutch and British ambassadors, aware of Ripperda's fall, had leagued together for the purpose of

drawing from him, while agitated both by indignation and fear, all the secret plans and views of the Austrian and Spanish courts. This suspicion, however, would seem to be totally unfounded, as no trace of any such preconcerted design is to be found in the correspondence of the British ambassador. Colonel Stanhope was at the time at Aranjuez, and though perhaps suspecting that the minister's fall was approaching, it would seem that he did not imagine it was so near. An express, however, conveyed to him the tidings of Ripperda's disgrace, upon which he immediately determined to return to Madrid, in order to watch and take advantage of the course of events.

On arriving at night in the capital, Stanhope was astonished to find his house occupied by the Dutch ambassador and the fallen minister of Spain. The latter, in the most humiliating state of agitation that it is possible to conceive, claimed the protection of the British ambassador, and threw himself upon his generosity. Stanhope appears to have been a man of the most cool and deliberate character, and is well described by a few words of the Portuguese minister, who said, that he was a "man who never interrupted those who spoke to him." Having heard Ripperda's application, he demanded, before he would grant him the protection of the British embassy, to be distinctly informed whether he was still in any way in the service of the king of Spain; and, secondly, whether he could regard himself as the actual object of any accusation, or as lying under the displeasure of his master.

Ripperda immediately produced the decree which dismissed him from all his offices, and at the same time assigned him a pension. This was conceived, both by himself and by Stanhope, to be a sufficient answer to the questions which it had been necessary to put to him, as it showed at once, that he was no longer a servant of the king of Spain, and yet that he was labouring under no accusation on the part of that monarch. Thereupon Stanhope promised him such

protection as the British embassy could afford; and Ripperda, giving way to his agitated and troubled feelings, not only poured forth against the courts of Madrid and Vienna all the furious invectives of an indignant and disappointed heart, but, with that utter laxity of principle which disgraced him through his whole life, revealed all the secrets, plans, purposes, and expectations of the court whose favour he had lost. Tears and groans mingled with his confession; and he expressed the deepest feelings of affection for Great Britain, and contrition at having aided the court of Austria in any designs against her.

A number of important facts, doubtless much exaggerated, and perhaps mingled with many of the creations of his own imagination, were thus gained from Ripperda by the British ambassador, who immediately committed the whole to writing, and took measures for transmitting a correct account thereof to England, notwithstanding the jealousy of the Spanish court, and the difficulty of passing despatches through Spain without subjecting them to be intercepted. During his stay at the British embassy Ripperda addressed a letter of remonstrance, we might almost say of reproach, to Philip, setting forth his services, and endeavouring, in a wild and unconnected strain of eloquence, to recover the favour that was lost for ever; while, undoing his own work, he strove to separate Spain from Austria, and unite her to France and England.

He petitioned, however, in the same letter, to be allowed to retire into a convent, still clinging to the belief that the king and queen of Spain could not do without him; but the virulence of his enemies increased with their boldness, and their boldness was augmented by every new sign of weakness or folly that he displayed. Shortly after his arrival in the house of colonel Stanhope, the court of Spain demanded the surrender of his person. This the British ambassador at once refused; and Philip, justly holding that the privilege of no foreign minister was sufficient to shield a person who was still

a naturalised subject of the crown of Spain, sent a party of sixty dragoons, with a civil officer, to take him by force in case of resistance. Appearing before the house of colonel Stanhope early in the morning of the 25th of May, the civil officer and the commander of the escort demanded the duke of Ripperda, and plainly intimated their intention to enforce their orders.

Colonel Stanhope, however, was not weak enough to oppose them otherwise than by words: and though he made a formal protest against the violation of his privileges, no notice was taken of his remonstrances, and Ripperda, who was not yet out of bed, was forced to rise, and take his place in a carriage which was already prepared. All his papers were at the same time seized; only one servant was allowed to accompany him; and, rolling onward with his conductors, he was soon lodged as a prisoner in the tower of Segovia. That building had contained many famous prisoners at different periods; but now it was not so well furnished with guests: and the arrival of the former minister was an event of much importance in the little circle of the prison. The governor, it would seem, treated him with every degree of lenity and kindness, and admitted a number of persons to see and converse with him: a hundred doubloons, were, we are told, allowed per month for his table; and every thing that could render his situation as a prisoner comfortable and endurable surrounded him in his present state of confinement.

In the mean while the British government, though evidently determined from the first to pursue no very active measures, in return for the violation of its ambassador's privileges, by the capture of Ripperda in his house, formally remonstrated against that act, and showed as much interest as could be expected in the fate of Ripperda. The fallen minister, in his state of confinement, after having given way to various paroxysms of rage, alternated with deep despondency, which combination had caused a report of his insanity to become current in Spain, applied himself to watch the progress of events in

Europe, and to draw thence food for the hopes wherewith he supported his hours of imprisonment. The remonstrances of the court of England, the appearance of the British fleet upon the coast of Spain, the fall of the duke of Bourbon and the elevation of Fleury in France, the indifference shown by Prussia towards her confederates in the treaty of Hanover, and many other political events of the day, all tended to affect Ripperda more or less in his confinement : now raising his expectations of deliverance, by the efforts of foreign powers, or the changes of policy of his own court ; now depriving him of such hopes, and pointing to his own efforts as affording the only prospect of liberation.

Two several opportunities for attempting an escape, with a probability of success, occurred, we are confidently assured, while Ripperda thus watched the progress of events in the political world. On one occasion, it would seem, a soldier, who was admitted to his apartments to assist in carrying in his dinner, voluntarily offered to aid him in flight ; and on another a page, named Geronimo Enriquez, struck by the fate of this singular man, is said to have left his situation in Madrid, and to have entered into the service of the governor of the castle solely for the purpose of setting Ripperda at liberty. Both these occasions, however, he suffered to pass ; and it was not till all hope of some political change producing his restoration to freedom, had utterly abandoned him, that he at length made up his mind to attempt his escape from the alcazar of Segovia.

Never, perhaps, was there a bolder enterprise undertaken ; for though the regulations of the prison were evidently very much relaxed in favour of Ripperda, yet his own corporeal infirmities, suffering as he was severely from the gout, and unable to move with any degree of lightness and agility, appeared sufficient to deter even rashness itself from the attempt. Notwithstanding such disadvantages, however, Ripperda undertook and effected his escape, with circumstances as romantic and extraordinary as attended any other part of his life.

The principal agent in the escape of the fallen minister was a woman ; but it is very difficult to say what was her station in society, so different are the accounts given by different authors ; some declaring that she was a mere maid-servant in the alcazar, others contending that she was a person of a much higher rank and better education. In favour of the latter statement is the assertion of Ripperda himself, who declares that she was a lady of good family, a native of Tordesillas, but then residing at Segovia. There might be motives, however, for regarding even this declaration with suspicion, did not Ripperda's constant attachment to her, as well as all the particulars that have transpired of her manners and appearance, justify us in preferring this account to the other.

Her name was Josepha Ramos, and she was in the habit, it would seem, of visiting the wife of the governor, and spending a considerable portion of her time in the castle of Segovia. She there was made acquainted with Ripperda, interested in his fate, and attached to his person. That attachment went on till passion overcame the scruples of virtue, and she yielded herself entirely to his wishes and designs. When, at length, abandoning all hope of his release being effected by any other means than his own exertions, Ripperda determined to attempt to escape, he communicated his purpose to his mistress ; who instantly consented to go with him, and exert all her skill and determination in assisting his evasion. Another person, however, was to be trusted, without whose concurrence nothing could be effected ; this was the single servant who had been allowed to accompany Ripperda to prison, and who is stated to have been a Frenchman who had followed him from Holland. He readily agreed to aid his master by any means in his power and even at some personal risk ; and by bribes and persuasions, the corporal of the guard, to whom the immediate inspection of the prisoner's apartments had been confided, was brought to take a principal part in the scheme.

The governor and his wife were both ill at the time that the arrangements for the prisoner's escape were concluded ; and in the month of September, 1627, Ripperda took advantage of this favourable circumstance to put his design in execution. By the diligence and activity of his mistress, horses were placed at a short distance ; and, having introduced herself into the castle in the clothes of a boy, she is said to have lain concealed in a flower garden till the arrival of the hour appointed, when, with the aid of the corporal and the servant, she assisted her lover to descend from his apartments, and to pass over the high external wall of the castle. This was effected by means of a rope ladder, and another ladder which the gardener had left in the garden. As soon as Ripperda reached the road he mounted on horseback, and galloped with all speed to Carbonera.* The corporal and doña Josepha followed, soon after, in a carriage, which was absolutely necessary to the fugitive, he being unable, on account of the gout, to proceed far in any other manner.

As soon as these two arrived, the whole party turned towards Portugal, doña Josepha passing on the road for Ripperda's sister, and he taking the name of don Antonio Mendoza. They thus reached Portugal in safety, though not, of course, without some difficulties. The greatest danger, however, which could have befallen them had been obviated by the fidelity and devotion of Ripperda's servant. The enfeebled state and gouty habit of the prisoner had rendered any attempt at escape so improbable, that suspicion had not been in the slightest degree awakened. The disappearance of the corporal was attributed to some other cause ; and Ripperda's servant, who had remained behind, following faithfully the orders of his master, gave out that the prisoner was ill in bed with a violent attack of gout, and maintained the same appearance, in every respect, which had been usual

* By some accounts Ripperda waited two whole days at Carbonera, while doña Josepha calmly made all the necessary arrangements for following.

on such occasions. He received the provisions which were sent for his master's table, contrived that a portion of them should disappear, and during nine days, by the end of which time Ripperda was safe from pursuit, managed to lull all suspicion.

At the end of that time, however, the governor, having recovered, proceeded to visit the apartments of the prisoner, and finding that he was gone, immediately notified his escape to the government at Madrid. No clue, however, to his course could be found; and if any efforts were made to overtake him, they of course proved vain. The servant was subjected to a short imprisonment; and as soon as he was set at liberty proceeded to rejoin his master.

Such is one out of an immense number of accounts, given by various authors, of the manner in which Ripperda effected his flight. The matter may be ever doubtful, and in all probability exaggeration and embellishment will be found in the particulars of every statement regarding an event which was in itself sufficiently marvellous. Passing safely through Portugal, Ripperda embarked at Oporto for England; and, after having been driven by stress of weather into Cork, he landed on the coast of Devonshire, and stopped for some days at Exeter, while his arrival was notified to the British government. His appearance in England caused not a little excitement in the public mind, his flight from Segovia, and probable course and proceedings, having previously been the subject of a thousand conjectures and reports in the public journals of the day. Nor was his arrival considered as a matter of slight importance even with the government of this country, which was at that time negotiating with Spain, and shaken by the death of George I. and the intrigues of the house of Stuart.

The ministry of this country expected, not without a great degree of probability, that Ripperda might furnish them with much information and guidance in regard to Spanish policy. The under secretary of

state was sent to meet the fallen minister, a residence was assigned to him at Eton, and several long conferences took place between him and lord Townshend, who treated him with marked distinction. Ripperda's ambitious spirit, however, was not to be satisfied with empty honours ; and, as soon as he had become in some degree habituated to the manners and customs of the British nation, he conceived the vain hope of distinguishing himself here as he had done in Spain. The wealth which he had secured in many of the principal banks of Europe gave him the means of maintaining a considerable degree of splendour ; and, soon emerging from the obscurity which he had at first affected in England, he applied himself diligently to study the language of the country, and laid before the ministers various schemes of finance and policy, which attracted but little attention, and produced no result.

At length his proceedings and their object attracted the notice of some of the public prints, who instantly attacked him with that furious indecency which is one of the concomitant evils of a beneficial liberty. He was called a political charlatan, a faithless impostor, and an abandoned prostitute ; terms which, however well they might be deserved, certainly did no honour to those who employed them. About the same time a treaty was signed between England and Spain, the information of Ripperda became no longer useful to Great Britain, and he found himself at once libelled and neglected. After remaining a short time longer in England, he collected his property together, transferred it to Holland, and with his mistress and family set sail for his native country in 1731.

He might here, in all probability, have remained at ease, and might have passed the latter portion of his life in peace and security ; for though it is undoubted that the Spanish government demanded that he should be given up to them as a fugitive prisoner, yet it is equally clear that the application was not very urgently made, and that there was not the slightest chance that it would be

listened to. His spirit, however, was not formed for repose ; and it is more than probable that his intellect had been in some degree affected by his sudden prosperity and elevation, his sudden fall and misfortunes. No sooner was he settled at the Hague, than he looked round him for some means of employing his restless spirit, and satisfying his hungry ambition. We are assured that he first made efforts to obtain a footing in Russia, which, like Spain, was at that time, a great and favourable theatre for political and military adventurers ; but his views were met with coldness by the Russian ambassador, and he soon turned his eyes in another direction.

There was at that time employed at the Hague an envoy from the court of Morocco, of the name of Perez, by some asserted to be himself a renegado, and by others to be descended from a Spaniard who had abjured the Christian religion. This person, shortly after Ripperda's return from England, sought an introduction to the former minister of Spain. Soon perceiving that neither years nor misfortunes had quelled the active spirit of the duke, he suggested to him, that in the states of the emperor of Morocco he might find a field for the exercise of his talents, and for the gratification of his ambition. Ripperda listened not displeased. The prospect of wild and striking adventure was ever grateful to him ; and the thought of taking vengeance upon Spain in all probability mingled with the vision which the suggestion of Perez called up before his eyes. Schemes of vast and sweeping enterprises presented themselves rapidly to his eager imagination, and his determination was soon taken to try his fortunes upon the shores of Africa. Accordingly he once more arranged his affairs with careful prudence, intrusted his wealth and his estates to the management of a faithful friend of the name of Troye, and, still accompanied by doña Josepha, set sail for Morocco towards the end of the year 1731, taking with him a sufficient sum to give splendour and dignity to his appearance in the eyes of the mahomedans.

The reception which Perez had promised him was out-

done by that with which the emperor of Morocco met him. His reputation for talent and for great scope of mind had flown before him, and both at Tangiers and Mequinez he was received with high honour. In the latter city, his progress in royal favour was as rapid as it had been in Madrid ; and though it is not possible to trace his course in this new career with any great degree of precision, it is evident that he rose rapidly to the highest offices of the state. As every Moor is a soldier, Ripperda determined at once to resume his first profession ; and the command of the army destined to defend the coast of Morocco against a threatened Spanish invasion was now given to the former minister of Spain. It has been very generally asserted, though without any distinct authority, that Ripperda not only entertained the purpose of expelling the Spaniards from Ceuta, but of combining the whole forces of the Moorish empire, calling together all the wandering tribes which had in former ages swelled the armies of Morocco to such a vast extent, and — united with other barbarous powers — of pouring once more the torrent of mahomedan invasion into Spain.

All that we can say, in regard to this plan, is, that it accords well with the character of the person to whom it was attributed. But there can be no doubt that, as soon as Ripperda was appointed to command the army of Morocco, he did all that was in the power of a single individual to remedy the defects of the Moorish military system, and to introduce, as far as possible, a degree of discipline and subordination. With a force variously stated from 30,000 to 40,000 men, he advanced towards the coast for the purpose of attacking Ceuta ; but he had no opportunity whatsoever of distinguishing himself, or of effecting the changes he proposed in the army, before the Spanish fleet appeared upon the coast in the neighbourhood of Oran, consisting of twenty-five ships of war, with 30,000 men destined for the land service.*

* Few armaments have been estimated, in regard to numbers, more

In order to deceive the Moorish force, which was known to be on the coast, a feigned attempt to disembark was made by the Spaniards on the 29th of June, 1732, at the distance of about seven leagues to the east of Oran. Ripperda, who was suffering severely from the gout, allowed himself to be deceived; and the Spanish disembarkation was accordingly effected without difficulty, a league and a half to the west of Mazalquivir. Scarcely, however, had it taken place, when he attacked the Spaniards, for the purpose of taking possession of the only watering-place in the neighbourhood. For this point a severe struggle took place: each army reinforced its advanced posts; and in the end a general engagement was brought on, in which, as may be supposed, the Spanish army, composed of well-disciplined and regular troops, defeated the Moors, though not without a sanguinary and protracted battle. Oran immediately fell into the hands of the Spaniards, and a garrison of 8000 men were left in it to defend it against the anticipated attacks of the Moors.

As had been expected, it was not long before Ripperda returned and endeavoured to wrest from the Spaniards the places they had taken. Some slight success at first attended his efforts; and the marquis de Santa Cruz having been killed in a sally which he led from Oran against the besieging army, the Spaniards were driven back to the town. A second sally, however, proved more successful; and, after a renewed struggle, the Moors were again defeated, and forced from their lines with considerable loss. The presence of Ripperda with the infidel army, and the high station which he now held in a mahomedan state, filled the court of Spain with indignation, though not with the fear that he expected; and though his honours as a duke and grandee of Spain had hitherto been spared during his various wanderings, a royal decree

variously than the present. I have given it in the text as I find it in the continuation of Mariana; but Coxé states the Spanish force to have consisted of 25,000 men, convoyed by forty-five ships of war.

was promulgated by Philip, depriving him for ever of those titles.

At the same time the report of his having once more abandoned the creed he had assumed, and apostatised altogether from the christian faith, spread throughout Europe, and it has ever since been doubtful whether such was really the case or not. No doubt of the fact, however, remains upon my mind; for it is so totally contrary to the whole spirit of the mahommedan faith to suffer a person considered as an infidel to hold any office of importance, that I cannot for a moment believe that Ripperda could have been invested with the post which he occupied, had he not previously abjured the christian religion. No mussulman army would have willingly fought under the sole command of a christian, and every reverse that attended the arms of the Moors would have been attributed to his infidelity. Nevertheless, Ripperda, in a letter to his Dutch correspondent, M. Troye, boldly denies the charge, and endeavours to refute it.

Notwithstanding his ill success in arms, the credit of the adventurer was not diminished, and he was appointed to an office equivalent to that of prime minister. In this situation we are told that he did much to improve the revenues of the emperor, though he has been accused by some writers of debasing the coin, and of carrying on a lucrative traffic under favour of the variations thus produced. The whole accounts of this part of his life, however, are so obscure, and are founded, with regard to particulars, upon such doubtful authority, that all these assertions must be received with very great suspicion. He is also represented to have led a very luxurious and profligate life during the years that he spent in Morocco, forming for himself a society of the principal renegades from different countries. That he held some correspondence with Theodore, the phantom king of Corsica, and aided that adventurer with considerable sums of money, seems to be beyond doubt. But farther than this we know very little of his proceedings, till the

epoch when the revolt of the negro guards of Muley Abdallah expelled the sovereign that he served from Mequinez, and raised for a time Muley Ali to the throne.

Ripperda, though by this time he is represented to have become an object of detestation to the people, contrived to effect his escape to Tetuan, with his family and treasures. He was hospitably received by the pasha of that place, which, though under the dominion of Morocco, generally maintained itself in a state nearly approaching independence. Here Ripperda continued to live surrounded with all the gratifications and luxuries that wealth could supply, suffering, indeed, severely from the gout, and increasing his malady, we are told, by indulgence. In all his wanderings his Spanish mistress had accompanied him, and for her he had shown, ever since his escape from Segovia, the most tender and devoted attachment. Shortly after her arrival at Tetuan, however, her health began to fail under the climate of Africa, and it was considered necessary that she should return for a time to Europe. She accordingly set sail for Holland, and lived to arrive at Amsterdam. She died, however, of dropsy, within a few weeks after having reached that city; and the mental and corporeal health of Ripperda seems to have received a shock from her loss which he never recovered.

He who, in truth, through life had possessed no religious principles of any kind, now became, we are told, affected by a species of religious madness. He believed himself to be inspired, endeavoured to propagate a new religion, and poured forth a thousand extravagant doctrines, which of course met with persons to follow and approve them. The reverence with which mahomedans regard the insane screened him from the fanaticism of the more bigotted mussulmans; and, shortly after this last effort of ambition in its dotage, Ripperda closed his long and eventful career in the year 1737.

In relating his adventures since he arrived in Morocco, I have selected from the multitude of anecdotes told of him those few particulars which seem to me to bear the stamp

of authenticity. That he commanded the Moorish army against the Spaniards is known ; that he was raised to the rank of pasha effendi is equally certain, as well as that he retained the favour of Muley Abdallah till that sovereign was driven from the throne. With regard to his debasing the currency, taking advantage of the variations thus produced to increase by fraud his private wealth, living a luxurious life, embracing the mahomedan faith, and endeavouring to establish a new religion, we have no proofs, except contemporary reports, and the strong presumption derived from an unprincipled and irreligious life.

After what we have said, it will be unnecessary to examine particularly the character of Ripperda as a statesman. The want of grandeur and comprehensiveness of mind, of just judgment and of sound sense, prevented him from attaining those fixed principles, either in morals or religion, which would have guarded him from most of those errors that affected him both as a statesman and a man. For the purposes of serving his own ambition, he promised ever more than he could perform, threatened where he had no power of execution, and undertook what it was impossible to accomplish. A strict regard for truth and honour would have given or supplied the place of prudence ; and though he might never have risen so high, he would have retained what he obtained, and never have fallen so low, or so rapidly.

Dishonest in his promises, there can be no doubt that he was dishonest in his practices ; and the want of all public confidence in his intentions may and must have had its share in thwarting many of his best purposes. Who could look for the reform of courts of justice to a man who was fraudulent in his own transactions ? What harpy of the finance might not grumble at severity exercised by a notorious peculator ? Nevertheless Ripperda was not without some of the qualities which form a great minister, and many of those which confer the rank of a celebrated statesman. He had much penetration, some diplomatic skill, extensive political views, a minute and

comprehensive knowledge of finance, a conviction of the necessity of reforms, a great spirit of order in financial matters, considerable acquaintance with the springs of commercial prosperity, and confidence, which would have been salutary if it had not been overweening. He was imprudent, however, sanguine in all his calculations, rash in prosperity, depressed and despairing in adversity, loquacious, indiscreet of tongue, more visionary in his expectations than his theories ; and, though quick in perception and vast in design, feeble in execution and narrow in the real grasp of intellect. Notwithstanding the celebrity he acquired as a statesman, the power that he enjoyed for a time, the activity of his whole life, the energy he occasionally displayed, some specious talents, and an occasional gleam of bright purposes, perhaps no man ever rose less respected by those who raised him, enjoyed less authority when he seemed at the height of power, or fell more contemned and less pitied than the famous duke of Ripperda.

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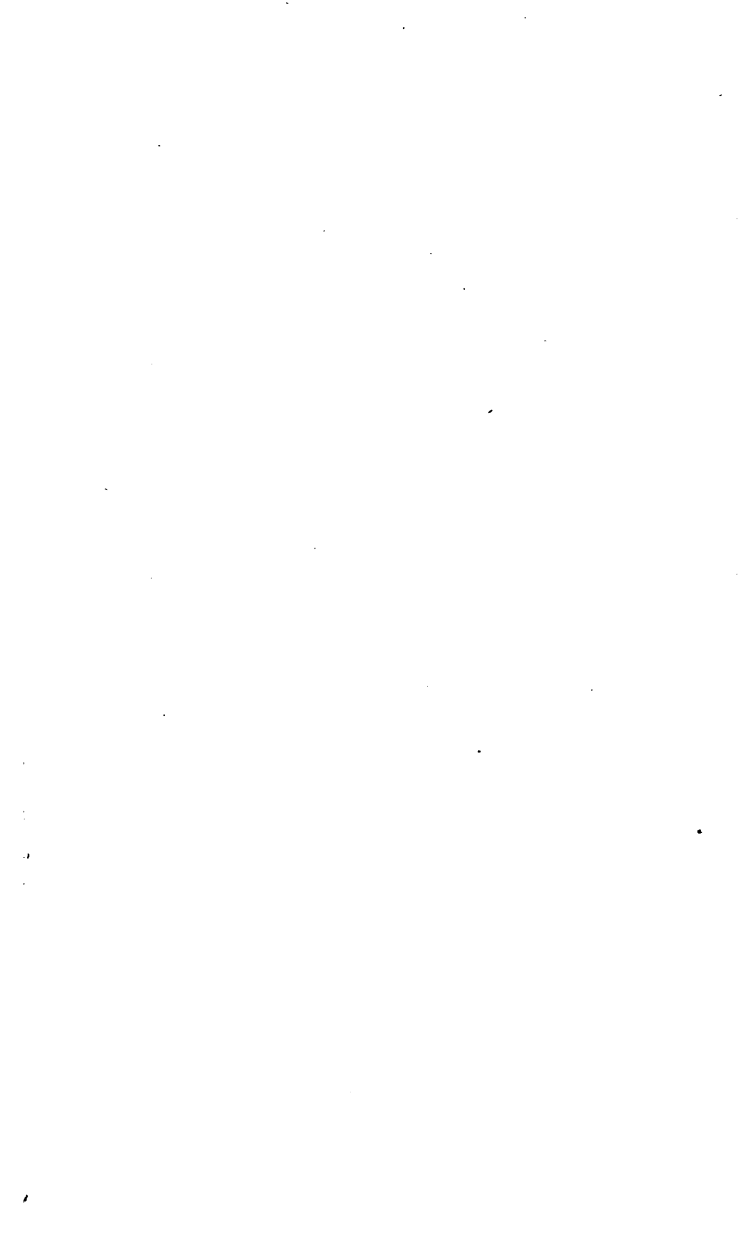
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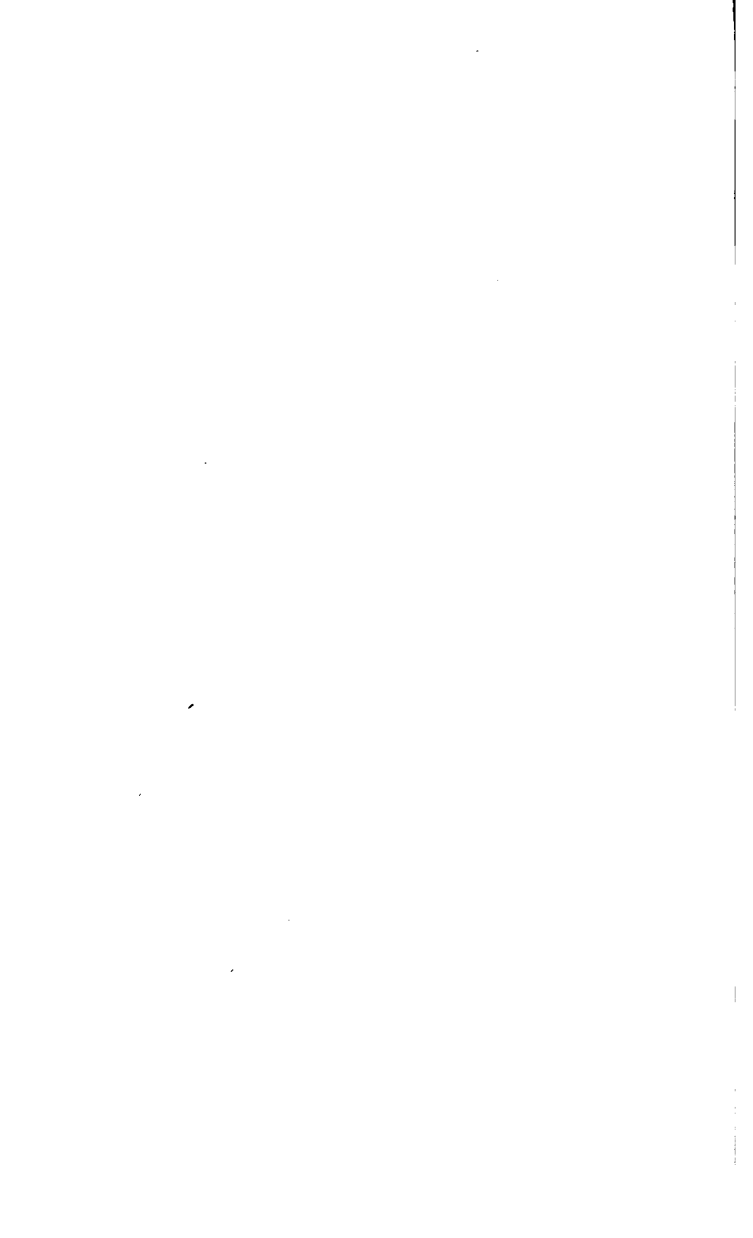
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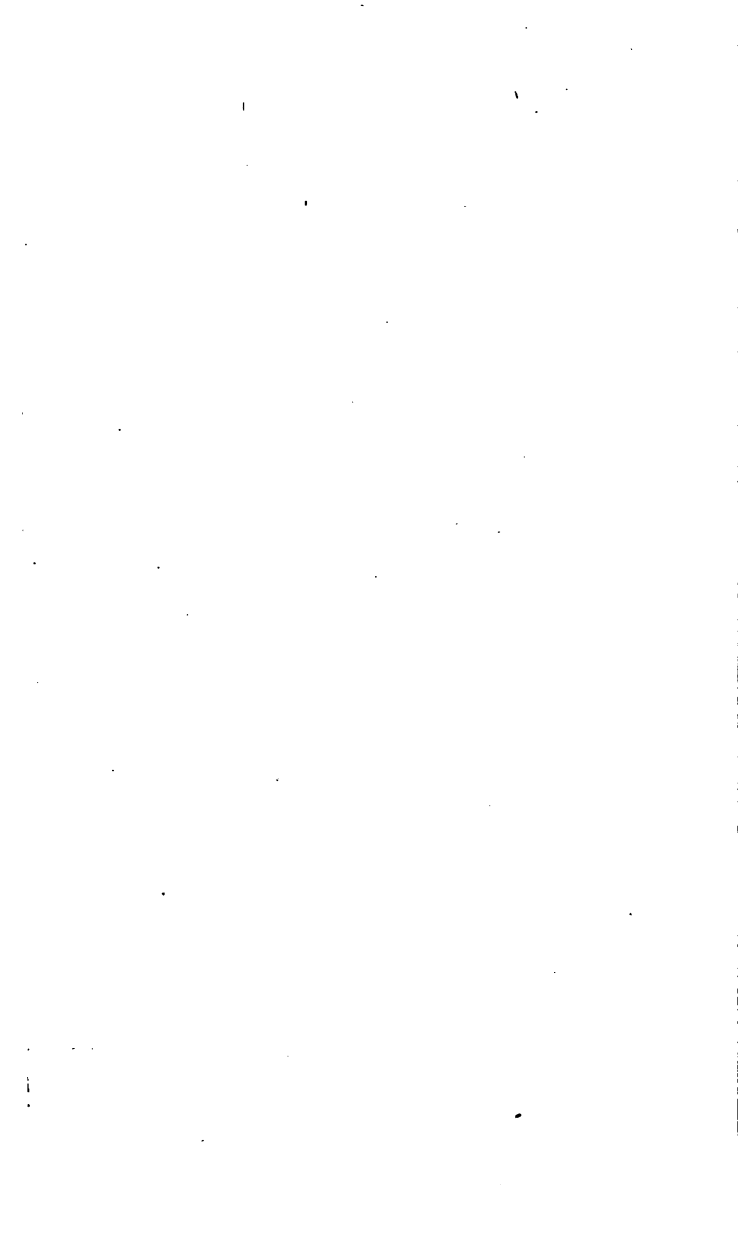
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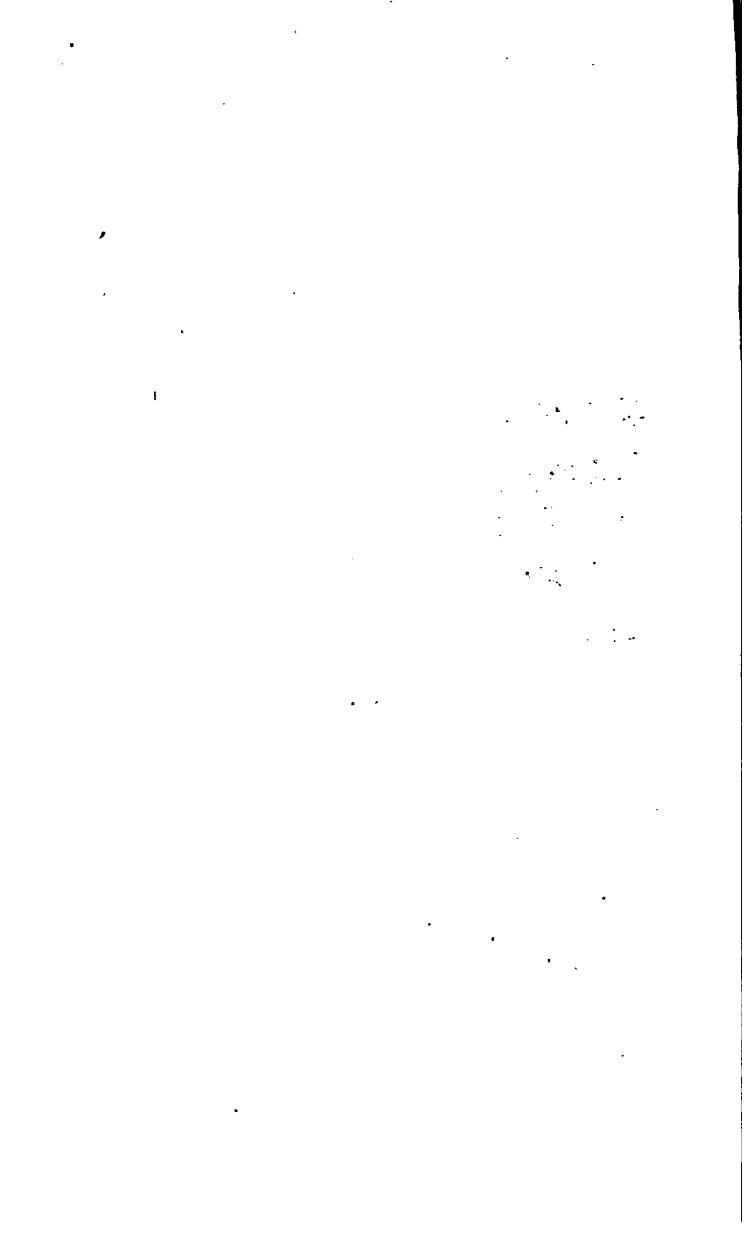
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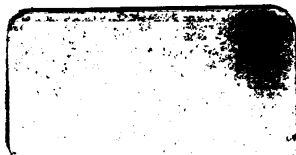
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